Jawaharlal Nehru

Letters to Chief Ministers

Volume 2
1950-1952

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Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund
Teen Murti House
New Delhi

Distributed by
Oxford University Press,
Oxford, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras

Printed and Photoset by
India Offset Press
A-1 Mayapuri, New Delhi

Editorial Note

The second volume of Jawaharlal Nehru's Letters to Chief Ministers covers the period from 26 January 1950, when the new Constitution came into force and India became a republic, to 18 May 1952 when, after the first general elections, the elected President, Vice-President and the new Government were sworn into office. The first steps had been taken in giving life and purpose to the structure established by the Constitution. This was followed up by initiation of planned development, land reforms and emphasis on production and community development. But even more important than official measures and blueprints and the building of democratic conventions was the maintenance of the spirit and integrity which had taken India to freedom; and this forms a continuous refrain in Nehru's letters to his colleagues in the States. It was primarily for this reason that he, on whom, after the death of Vallabhbhai Patel, the whole burden seemed to rest, took on the presidentship of the Congress party.

A particular aspect of this crisis of character was the growth of communal feeling; and this, taken with the intense anti-India propaganda in Pakistan, led to a sharp deterioration of relations between the two countries. Nehru, with the assistance of Patel, stemmed the tide at least temporarily by concluding an agreement, in the face of considerable opposition within the country, with Liaquat Ali Khan in April 1950. It was, as Nehru said, no appeasement of Pakistan but an effort to lessen tension. But matters were not helped by the conduct of the Western powers in the Security Council, who took a position hostile to India on the question of Kashmir and ignored Pakistan's aggression.

These major problems demanded much time and attention but did not result in the neglect of the commitment to the

maintenance of peace in the world. On both Korea and Tibet, Nehru did not shirk the issues and, unmindful of criticism, argued for reason and sanity.

On all these matters the fortnightly letters, along with twenty-seven special letters, included in this volume give us a clear, wider, and often even a new, perspective. Of particular interest is the last letter where Nehru writes movingly of the vital importance at every level, national and international, of human relations and the human touch.

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Abbreviations

A . I . C . C .	All India Congress Committee
A.I.O.C.	Anglo-Iranian Oil Company
A.I.R.	All India Radio
b.fn	biographical footnote
E.I.R.	East-Indian Railway
G.O.C. (-in-C.)	General Officer Commanding (-in-Chief)
I.C.S.	Indian Civil Service
I.N.S.	Indian Naval Ship
K.M.P.P.	Krishak Mazdoor Praja Party
N.A.T.O.	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
N.W.F.P.	North West Frontier Province
Pepsu	The Patiala and East Punjab States Union
R.S.S.	Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.N.C.I.P.	United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan
UNCURK	United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea
Unesco	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNTCOK	United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea
U.N.O.	United Nations Organization
U.P.	Uttar Pradesh
U.S.A.	United States of America
U.S.S.R.	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1

New Delhi
4 January, 1950

My dear Premier,*

I should like to draw your attention to a matter which I think is of importance. I hope I am not too late in doing so.

You are going to have elections for the new Parliament very soon.[1] I am writing to you about the necessity of having an adequate number of women members elected.[2] Even in the Constituent Assembly the women members were very few.[3] Of these some dropped out for various reasons and their places were filled by men. I think it is important that we should keep up and add to the number of women in Parliament. From every point of view this is desirable. I have no doubt that a sufficient number of women, at least as competent and suitable as men, are available.

In this matter perhaps an exception might be made to the general rule we have suggested regarding members of Provincial Assemblies who have been in the Constituent Assembly. That is to say, in regard to such women members, if

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. As the Constituent Assembly converted itself into a provisional Parliament till general elections could be held under the new Constitution and as the Constitution did not permit members of Parliament to retain their seats in the State Legislatures, several members of the Constituent Assembly had to resign. Bye-elections to fill these seats were held from 6 to 16 January 1950.

2. Only two additional women members were elected to the new Parliament.

3. There were eleven women members in the Constituent Assembly of whom four resigned as they were members of the State Legislatures also.

it is considered desirable, they may be permitted to resign from Provincial Assemblies in order to stand for Parliament. There are very few such cases.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2

New Delhi
18 January, 1950

My dear Premier,

I am sorry for the slight delay in writing this fortnightly letter. As you know, I had to go to Colombo to attend the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference.[1] I returned on the night of the 15th.

2. This is my last letter to you before the change-over to the Republic takes place.[2] This change is coming about gradually and inevitably. Because of that perhaps, its significance is not sufficiently realized. Nevertheless, it is clear that the coming of the Republic is a very big landmark in our history and the beginning of a new era. It brings fulfilment, on the political side at least, of the dream of vast numbers of Indians for generations past. It is the fulfilment of our pledge. Yet, we all know that we have not yet ended our journey and a very important part of our pledge still remains to be redeemed. That relates to the economic condition of the people.

3. Problems of great magnitude surround us and many of us are apt sometimes to grow a little weary or even despondent because of these problems and the slowness of advance towards their solution. In the country there is no flaming enthusiasm, which is so necessary for great deeds and rapid progress. It is difficult to keep the people at a high pitch for a long time. Looking round, however, and taking a dispassionate view of the situation, I am convinced that India is making good, however

1. Held from 9 to 14 January 1950.

2. In fulfilment of the pledge first taken twenty years earlier, the Republic was inaugurated on 26 January 1950.

slowly, and that the future of India is going to be a bright one. It may be that the next two or three years are difficult ones, but the final outcome is certain. I hope, therefore, that on the day when the long-sought Republic of India comes into existence, we shall look to the future with a stout heart and with confidence in ourselves and in our motherland. I hope that we shall try to forget, as far as possible, the conflicts and divisions that have invaded our ranks and the bitterness that sometimes creeps into our work. We must try to start afresh with open minds and open hearts, even for those who happen to differ from us. It was the sovereign method of Gandhiji to attract and convert even the doubters and the quibblers. Even more so we have to look into our own hearts and see where we have erred and what we have left undone. If we function rightly and with integrity of mind, other right results will also follow.

4. On this day it is also necessary that we should clarify our objectives and not allow ourselves to get entangled in the petty difficulties of today. Those basic objectives must be governed by that wide and tolerant outlook and the love of those who are under-privileged, which were so characteristic of the Father of the Nation.

5. The Commonwealth Conference held in Colombo did not arrive at any startling conclusions. Nor was it expected to in spite of what the press wrote about it. These conferences are for mutual consultation and mutual understanding from which, of course, a measure of co-operation results. But each country represented there is an independent country and has ultimately to decide for itself. The questions discussed were recognition of the new China, the situation in Indo-China, the Japanese peace treaty, aid to Burma, and economic help to the South and South-East Asia countries.

6. As you know, we have recognized the new Government in China.[3] There is still some correspondence going on with this

3. On 30 December 1949.

Government as to how this should be given effect to. I need not remind you of the tremendous world significance of recent changes in China. Not only Asia but also Europe and America are affected by them and gradually a new balance is coming into evidence. Perhaps one of the biggest question marks of the age is the future development of this new China. On what lines will it develop, how will it meet its economic problems, how soon will it advance industrially or otherwise, and what will its relations with other countries be? The countries of South East Asia are, of course, most intimately affected. So far as India is concerned, there is no fear or question of any direct danger. India has no desire to interfere in any way with the decision of the Chinese people. She wants friendly relations with them. At the same time, she cannot permit any interference with herself.

7. You will remember that it has been decided to hold a preliminary conference in South Africa to consider the various questions which have arisen there in regard to Indian-born citizens and which have given rise to our conflict with South Africa.[4] We are deputing Pandit H.N. Kunzru[5] to represent us in South Africa for this purpose.

8. The Kashmir issue still remains on the agenda of the Security Council. For the moment, it has been rather pushed out by the dispute over Chinese membership of the Security

Council,[6] and it is doubtful if it will be taken up there during January. The efforts at mediation of General McNaughton[7] have failed and it is clear that they cannot lead to any settlement.[8] There may be a full-dress debate in the Security Council.[9] If so, we shall welcome it. There may possibly be further attempts at mediation which we would welcome. But we have made it clear that such mediation can only take place satisfactorily in India itself. I am sorry to inform you that the attitude of the U.S.A. and U.K. Governments in this connection has not been at all helpful.[10]

9. Our relations with Pakistan, even apart from the Kashmir issue, are far from happy. So far as the jute question is concerned, that is, the stoppage of our jute by Pakistan, it appears that Pakistan has ordered the release of this jute.[11]

10. I think I have already informed you that we have suggested to Pakistan that a joint declaration should be made by both of us pledging ourselves not to resort to war for the settlement of any of our disputes.[12] Such disputes should be

6. The People's Republic of China demanded on 18 November 1949 and again on 8 January 1950 the expulsion of the Kuomintang delegation from the Security Council as it considered its presence illegal. The issue was discussed in the Security Council between January and March 1950.

7. For biographical footnote (hereafter b. fn.) see *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, p. 515.

8. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, pp. 515-516.

9. General McNaughton's report was debated in the Security Council from 7 to 10 February 1950.

10. The proposals were regarded by the American and the British representatives as meeting the requirements of holding a free plebiscite and in accord "with the views of well disposed and impartial observers of the issue." The Soviet delegate, however, maintained that it was for the parties concerned finally to judge the merits of the proposals.

11. On 8 January 1950, the Pakistan Government ordered the release of Indian jute which was in transit from Assam to Calcutta through East Bengal and held up at Barisal.

12. The draft of a no-war declaration was handed over to the High Commissioner of Pakistan on 22 December 1949.

settled by peaceful methods which may be negotiation, mediation, arbitration or by reference to a judicial tribunal. Pakistan's reply,[13] recently made in their Constituent Assembly, rather evades the issue and refers to various disputes pending between us, as well as some which have no existence now.[14] We are continuing this correspondence, but with no too great hope of achieving results, in view of the general attitude taken up by Pakistan. We pointed out to them that the whole object of a joint declaration was to relieve the tension between the two countries and thus create a better atmosphere for the peaceful settlement of disputes.[15] If we wait till every problem is solved, then there is little need for a joint declaration.

11. Next month there is going to be a general election in the United Kingdom.[16] Whatever the result of this election, and whichever party is returned to power there, India is not directly affected. Even the die-hards of the Conservative Party in England cannot interfere in any way with India. Nevertheless, this general election in the United Kingdom has a wider significance and importance and it may well have a bearing on the world situation. The big question there is whether the present Labour Government, with its general socialistic and planned approach to economic problems, will continue or not.

12. There has been some doubt as to whether Ministers in provinces continue after the change-over or not. There is no necessity for them to change or to resign. But they will have to take an oath of allegiance to the new Constitution.

13. On 17 January 1950

14. Liaquat Ali Khan had said that "India's terms are too vague. In our view, the only way to promote peace is to resolve major disputes and a joint declaration will carry conviction to no one unless it is supported by evidence of some concrete action..."

15. Nehru replied to Liaquat Ali Khan on 18 January 1950.

16. In the elections held on 24 February 1950, the Labour Party retained power by a narrow majority.

13. You will have seen the statement I issued about elections in West Bengal.[17] I did so with great reluctance because it is not a good thing to go back on such a decision.[18] But circumstances compelled us and it became progressively more and more difficult to hold any provisional election, especially as the general elections will be coming soon after.

14. We have decided about the formation of Andhra Province.[19] But it is not a very simple matter to give effect to that decision. For our part, we want to expedite it as much as possible. But the various consequences, and more especially the financial ones, require careful investigation before any further step is taken. We cannot finalize anything till then. Objections have also been raised by some people in Andhra and in the Bellary district and that makes our task a little harder. I am afraid there is no possibility of this new province being formed before the 26th January.

15. I was very sorry to learn that in spite of my request to provinces, relatively few women have been chosen for Parliament.[20] I think this keeping out of women is basically wrong and is certainly opposed to our general Congress policy.

16. The Akalis in the Punjab have declared that they do not accept this Constitution and they have even decided to boycott

17. Nehru stated on 8 January that it had been decided not to hold interim elections in West Bengal under the 1935 Constitution.

18. This had been proposed by Nehru on 12 September 1949.

19. On 1 January 1950, complete agreement on all issues raised by the Government of India on the formation of the Andhra Province was reached by the eight-member Partition Committee at Madras and approved by the Madras Cabinet on 4 January 1950. The Partition Committee set up in November 1949 by the Central Government recommended that Andhra Province be formed before the inauguration of the Republic. In fact, the new State came into existence on 1 October 1953.

20. See *ante*, p. 1.

any celebration of it.[21] It is open to them to do so, but it is obvious that certain consequences will follow. Their policy in the past has been a singularly unstable one, and I have been sorry to notice that they lack vision and perspective completely and approach big national problems from rather a narrow viewpoint. Some others have also declared their condemnation of this Constitution. It is open to anyone to like or dislike the Constitution or any law. But it is a dangerous procedure for any individual or for any group to range itself in a hostile manner and even go to the extent of boycotting the Constitution as framed. Any person may work peacefully for the change of the Constitution, but we cannot tolerate any insult to it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

21. The Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal meeting at Amritsar on 8 January 1950 refused to accept the new Constitution on the ground that "it monopolizes most powers for the Centre to the prejudice of the Sikhs; reserves enormous authority for the executive and the legislature to the prejudice of the judiciary; makes personal freedom illusory by hedging too many restrictions and limitations; and gives dictatorial powers to the President in times of emergency and does not guarantee anything for the poor and neglected." It called upon Sikhs to boycott the Republic Day celebrations.

3

New Delhi
2 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

This is my first letter to you since India became a Republic. The change brought no addition to our independence. Nevertheless, it was one of high significance and there is no doubt that the people generally all over the country sensed it as such.

2. The pageantry and ceremonial are over and we have to settle down now to our humdrum activities and labours. With one difference. Any big change like this compels one to think of what we are aiming at and how we propose to get there—objectives and ends, ideals and policies and methods. There is a tendency to look back and be retrospective, a tendency to look ahead, but above all, to look at the problems which surround us in the present. It is possible to make a fairly lengthy list of our achievements; it is also possible to make an equally lengthy list of our lack of achievements. Perhaps the biggest lack is a psychological one. In spite of occasional bursts of enthusiasm among the people, as on the occasion of the celebration of Republic Day, there is an inertness and passivity and a complete lack of enthusiasm, generally speaking, among the people. On the eve of a new phase in our history, what is most necessary is a flaming enthusiasm for the tasks in hand—faith, confidence, energy and the spirit of concerted effort. Do we find any of these today in India? Certainly in some measure in some people. But, certainly also, a lack of all of them in most people most of the time. Disruptive forces grow and people's minds are full of doubt as to what they should do and so they turn to criticism of others without doing much

themselves. The tone of our public life goes down. We take the name of Gandhi, as we did before and as no doubt we shall continue to do in the future, and yet, I often wonder what he would say if he saw us now and looked at the picture of India.

3. We work hard and wear ourselves away and that itself gives some satisfaction. If people do not appreciate our labours, we tend to blame them and think that they are unfair to us. Yet the essence of democratic functioning is not merely that we do the right thing but also that we make others appreciate this. A good workman does not blame his tools, even though the tools may not be good. We have to work with the tools we have in human and other materials.

4. We face big problems, economic and political, and yet, I am convinced that the biggest problem of all is this psychological problem of raising the morale of the people and of turning it to enthusiastic effort. Many people in India lead a poor enough existence and some kind of suffering and unhappiness is their lot. Obviously we cannot put an end to this suddenly as if by magic. There is, perhaps, a certain inevitability about the gradual progress of a nation. That gradualness can be speeded up somewhat, but where a whole nation of hundreds of millions has to be trained up, there is no magic way of doing it. So we should not be dispirited if the pace is sometimes slow, provided that there is a movement and in the right direction. It is true that pace itself counts when evil forces also march, for if we do not move fast enough, that evil overtakes us and might overwhelm us.

5. Is our direction right, what are our objectives, and is our pace adequate? These questions no doubt occur to you, as they occur to me. We live in a world blinded by fear and hatred and the spirit of violence. And even though we talk of Gandhi and non-violence, our own eyes are shrouded often enough and there is enough of violence and fear and hatred round about us. What a legacy we have inherited! This year 1950, the middle of the century, may well bring big changes in the world as well as

in India. Are we aware of the big movements that are taking place all over the world? India cannot remain unaffected and indeed one can sense something happening even in the minds of the Indian people. Do we keep our ears open to that and keep in tune with it or are we too busy with our work and our activities to think of these urges and movements in people's minds?

6. You will forgive me for this rather unnecessary preamble to my letter. But I feel troubled occasionally by the turn events take and the lack of social consciousness and homogeneity that I see in India today. The Communists, with all the idealistic element that is no doubt part of communism, have become bitter enemies of society and order in India and have practically become terrorists.[1] The communalists function on the mental plane of the fascists and Nazis. The Hindu Mahasabha comes out from time to time with the stupidest of proposals.[2] And yet stupidity has a market, if it puts on some kind of a nationalist garb. Even in our Congress ranks, disruptive tendencies are in evidence. The capitalist elements in India are cursed and sworn at frequently enough and most ills are attributed to them. That is unfair. They are the product of our times and of our economic structure, and it is futile to blame them. Yet it is a fact that, generally speaking, our capitalist classes, like our land-owning classes, are singularly lacking in a social outlook, even though they may be patriotic and may desire to serve India. We talk of capitalism, socialism and communism, and yet we lack the social content of all of these.

1. Numerous cases of political murders and dacoities in Nalgonda district in 1949 were reported by the Hyderabad Government on 10 January 1950. Similar reports were received during this period from the districts of Warangal, Krishna, Karimnagar and Mehboobnagar.

2. Nehru appears to have had in mind the resolution of the Working Committee of the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha on 28 January reiterating its determination to continue its fight for *Akhand Bharat* and declaring that it was "the birthright of every Hindu to agitate for its attainment."

7. What then are we to do? First of all, we must never permit ourselves to become static in our minds and smug in our approach. There is no greater danger than that. We have to keep in tune with the masses of our people and try to win their confidence. We can only do so if we work to that end and produce some results. As I think I have told you before, we have not merely to work for the masses but work with them. We want the co-operation of all classes, and yet, in the final analysis, we must give first place to the masses of our people.

8. If we drew up a balance-sheet of our work during the past two years, I think we can legitimately say that in the international field, India has made great progress and has found a definite place for herself. We can say that the integration of the states in India has been a remarkable achievement. In regard to other domestic activities, I think we have made good in the improvement of transport. We have lately made marked progress on the food front. Some of the provinces have gone ahead with their zamindari legislation which is so important. Perhaps we might also say that the mere fact that we have carried on more or less with success, in spite of the perils and dangers that surrounded us, is no mean achievement. That is the credit side. The debit side is also formidable.

9. At the end of this year the general elections will be held and that will be a big test for all of us.[3] It does not so much matter who wins the election and who does not. But it does matter very much that a strong and capable government should emerge out of these elections.

3. Starting with the elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies on 18 October 1951 and followed by the elections to the Upper Houses, i.e., the Rajya Sabha and the State Legislative Councils, the first general elections ended in April 1952. The elections were delayed because of the problems faced by the Election Commission in preparing the electoral rolls and in the delimitation of constituencies.

10. You must have read the President's[4] speech in Parliament,[5] a copy of which was sent to you. There is nothing very novel about this except the proposal to have a Planning Commission, and that is not a very new proposal. I am convinced more and more that a Planning Commission of the first quality is essential for us. I hope that before long this Commission will be announced and formed.[6] Such a Commission can only work effectively if the States give their full co-operation to it. The States indeed may have to form their own small Commissions of this kind.[7] Planning again depends very much on proper statistical information. Hence the necessity for improving our statistics. It must be remembered that statistics is not merely the business of collecting some figures and numbers but giving us a great deal of information about social trends and enabling us to judge the success or failure of any activity that we undertake.

11. Food remains, as ever, our primary activity. There has been much talk of our growing jute and cotton and these are essential for our economy. But let it be clearly understood that jute and cotton will not come in the way of our producing food, which is the first necessity. We must and will reach our target by the end of next year.

12. The last Food Conference held in Delhi[8] brought out the necessity of combining the food and agriculture portfolios in the State Governments. This arrangement already exists in some of the States, notably Punjab, Bengal and Madhya

Bharat, but in most of the States the two portfolios are separate. It is obvious that there cannot be co-ordinated effort unless food and agriculture go hand in hand. I would commend this to your particular attention.

13. There is also the desirability of introducing legislation which would assist the Grow-More-Food Campaign. Where this is done, the results have been very attractive and promising for the future. The mere fact of having such legislation results in an increased activity for growing food and produces a helpful psychological atmosphere. Legislation may be brought for bringing fallow land under cultivation, for compulsory irrigation of all land commanded by irrigation sources, for the use of pure seed in those areas where Government can provide it, and for the removal of pests and weeds. All these require a joint effort and legislation is meant to help in creating such a joint effort.

14. Just before the Republic Day, we had the visit of a number of Commonwealth Ministers, Mr. Noel-Baker[9] of the U.K., Mr. Pearson[10] of Canada and Mr Spender[11] of Australia. These visits are very desirable because these Ministers of other Governments get an insight into our problems and get to know our own Ministers. Nothing is more important in the world today than understanding each other. I think that all these people who have come here have gone back with a better understanding and greater appreciation of India.

9. Philip Noel-Baker (1889-1982) Labour M.P., 1929-31 and 1936-70; Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 1947-50. Paid a goodwill visit to India on 17 January 1950.

10. Lester Bowles Pearson (1897-1972). Canadian diplomat; Ambassador to U.S.A., 1945-46; Foreign Minister, 1948-57; President, U.N. General Assembly, 1952-53; Prime Minister, 1963-68; awarded Nobel Peace Prize, 1957. He visited India on 22 January 1950.

11. P.C. Spender (1897-1985). Australian statesman, diplomat and jurist; Member of Parliament, 1937-51; Minister of External Affairs, 1949-51; played a major role in launching the Colombo Plan; Ambassador to U.S.A., 1951-58; Judge, International Court of Justice, 1958-64, and its President, 1964-67. Visited New Delhi from 16 to 19 January 1950.

15. The most significant and welcome visit, however, was that of President Soekarno[12] and his wife.[13] They were a charming couple, deeply attracted to India, and their visit has drawn our two countries even closer together. I have been invited to visit Indonesia and I should very much like to go there.[14] If possible, I shall try to go there about the middle of this year. Thakin Nu,[15] the Prime Minister of Burma, also sent me an urgent invitation to visit Rangoon.[16] I could not go now, but if I go to Indonesia, I shall try to visit Burma also on the way.

16. Our relations with the new China have advanced a step further and in the course of a few days a representative of ours,[17] who is at present in Nanking, will proceed to Peking, the capital of the new China, as Charge d'Affaires. He is a junior officer and cannot discuss any major problem. All he will do is to settle certain procedural matters and later our Ambassador[18] will go there. I need hardly repeat, what I have said previously, that the emergence of the new China is the most important fact in Asia and the world today. What happens in China is the biggest question.

17. Bao Dai's[19] Government in Indo-China is being recognized by the U.S.A. and the U.K. Governments.[20] We

12. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 222.
13. From 23 to 29 January 1950.
14. Nehru visited Indonesia from 6 to 17 June 1950.
15. For b. fn. see Vol. 1, p. 18.
16. Visited Burma from 20 to 24 June 1950.
17. A.K. Sen.
18. K.M. Panikkar. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 317.
19. (b. 1913). Emperor of Annam, 1926-45; Head of State of South Vietnam from 1949, functioned from Hong Kong from 1950 and later from France till he was deposed in 1955.
20. On 1 February, Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State, criticized the Chinese and Soviet recognition of the Ho Chi Minh Government and announced his Government's intention to recognize the 'legal Governments' of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to "support the development of genuine national independence in former colonial areas." The United States and the United Kingdom recognized these Governments on 7 February 1950 as associate States within the French Union.

have made it clear that we do not propose to recognize Bao Dai's or the other Government in Indo-China, Ho Chi Minh's.[21] It seems to us that any recognition at this stage would be completely unrealistic and would entangle us in all manner of difficulties. Therefore, we are keeping aloof. Indeed Bao Dai can certainly not be considered independent, for France has retained authority in several important matters and there is a French army of over 100,000 in Indo-China.

18. We are not at all happy in regard to the developments in Pondicherry, where it is proposed to hold a plebiscite.[22] The French Government have been giving us a great deal of trouble and we are feeling more and more convinced that this plebiscite will not be a fair one as we had hoped. Many of the suggestions that we had repeatedly made have been turned down. We have sent a message to the French Government pointing all these out. If there is no change in the attitude of the French Government, we may have to come to the conclusion that this plebiscite cannot be recognized.

19. The Prime Minister of Nepal[23] will visit Delhi about the middle of this month and will stay here for a week.[24] This visit is being made at our invitation because we wish to discuss important problems with him affecting Nepal and Nepalese relations to India. At any time, these relations are important to India as well as to Nepal. But with recent developments in China and elsewhere, this importance has grown.

21. (1890-1969). Vietnamese political leader; founder member of the French Communist Party, 1918-22; organized the Viet Minh movement against the Japanese occupation and proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, 1945; President of the Republic, 1945-1969.

22. The municipal councils of Pondicherry, Yanam, Karaikal and Mahe, resolved on 21 March 1949 to hold a plebiscite on 11 December 1949 to decide about their future relationship with India. The plebiscite was postponed to 15 February 1950 as France and India could not work out a satisfactory procedure for holding it. The plans to hold a plebiscite were later abandoned.

23. Mohan Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana. For b. fn. see Vol. 1, p. 361.

24. He visited New Delhi from 17 to 24 February 1950.

Unfortunately, in many ways, Nepal is a very backward country, and there has been a great deal of domestic trouble there and agitation.[25] We have been continually pressing the Nepalese Government to introduce adequate reforms and pointing out that this is the only way to deal with the situation and the possible perils that Nepal might have to face.

20. There will soon be a general election in England. That does not affect in any way our domestic or foreign policy. But undoubtedly it will be an important event in world affairs and may have far-reaching consequences.

21. You will have read about certain developments in Eastern Pakistan. It is stated that the Pakistan police went to arrest some alleged Communists in a village in Khulna district. There was a conflict between the police and the villagers resulting in some deaths. Thereupon, a large force of police and others started a reign of terror in a number of villages,[26] destroyed them, looted them, raped many women and forcibly converted many people who mostly belonged to the depressed classes. This led to a migration to India, and about 12,000 persons are said to have crossed over up till now. Probably, as a consequence of this, there was an attack on Muslims in Murshidabad district resulting in a number of Muslims crossing over to Pakistan. Trouble in Murshidabad, however, was controlled fairly soon.

22. This development in Eastern Pakistan is a dangerous one. If it spreads, it will not only lead to enormous suffering, but also to large migrations. We are trying to deal with it in co-operation with the Pakistan Government as well as the Provincial Governments of Bengal, East and West.[27]

25. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, pp. 361-362.

26. Twenty villages in Bagerhat, Moltarhat, Kachua and Fakirhat thanas in Khulna district.

27. On 1 February 1950, the Government of India suggested to the East Bengal Government that a joint enquiry by the officials into the communal disturbances be held and immediate steps taken to control the situation.

23. Some of the jute that was held up by Pakistan has now been released and has reached Calcutta.[28] But this is only a small part of what was held up. It is said that the whole of it has been released, but it has not arrived yet. Because of this, there is some slight easing of the tension, but not much. The general stoppage of all trade between the two countries continues.

24. I am still in correspondence with the Prime Minister of Pakistan about our proposed joint declaration for the avoidance of war in the settlement of disputes. We have made little progress thus far. I am waiting for an answer from Pakistan to a long letter which I sent to the Prime Minister there.[29] Meanwhile, reports from Pakistan indicate a continuing activity in preparation for war.[30] We have to keep alert, but there is no reason why we should lose our heads or get excited about it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

28. See *ante*, pp. 6-7.

29. Refuting Liaquat Ali Khan's argument that no useful purpose would be served by merely signing a no-war declaration, Nehru wrote to him on 18 January that while all issues which affected the relations between the two countries were in the process of settlement through negotiations and the Kashmir issue was before the United Nations, "the whole object of the proposed joint declaration was to remove or lessen the unfortunate tension that exists between our two governments and to produce an atmosphere which is more favourable to the consideration and settlement of particular disputes."

30. For example, on 26 January 1950, the Minister of Industries spoke of Pakistan resorting to an "alternate course of action" than a settlement by peaceful negotiations.

4

New Delhi
6 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,[1]

I have received a letter from an American town and rural planner,[1] who has had experience in India. In this letter he refers to cottage and rural industries and makes a suggestion which might interest you. I am, therefore, quoting below from this letter: —

> My impression is that though a good deal is being accomplished in the provinces, it is nothing like enough as compared with what is required, or as so compared with the effort and expenditure being made. Nor do I think it likely that it is inherently possible for the governments to catch up with the problem and ever really "deliver the goods". I think the main reasons are two. One is that they have such a multiplicity of these industries, to all of which they must give some attention, that they cannot adequately concentrate on all the ramifications of any one, which is what is required for real success in any one.
>
> The second reason is that though the problem appears relatively simple because the problems even in any one industry are really extraordinarily complex, and require a special order of ability, experience and determination, and of freedom of decision and action, which are not available in government. For the problems are actually far more

[1] A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.
1. Albert Mayer. For b.fn. see Vol.1, p. 402.

complicated than in the mass production version of the same industry.

In the latter you have a great concentration in one place; your supply problem is much simpler in one place than to get supplies to a thousand or several thousand villages and may be ten or twenty or thirty producers in each; distribution and marketing are easier for the same reason; control of design and quality is infinitely easier. So it seems to me that what is needed is nothing like the usual type of man whose chief qualification is some degree of technical skill or experience, whose time and attention are spread far too thinly over too much diverse endeavour, but the highest type of large-scale executive and entrepreneurial skill and imagination and resourcefulness.

My suggestion is this: that such a man be induced to undertake to really reorganize and creatively and thoroughly organize all the aspects of one important cottage industry over one area (not necessarily and probably not desirably over a whole province), as a pilot project to show how the desired results are really to be encompassed. Or it might be called a mother project out of which others can grow and learn quite quickly, once the problems have really been vigorously posed, studied, solved in a thorough-going way in one, and the way has been shown.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5

New Delhi
7 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

It has often been stated that the general elections should take place in the winter of 1950-51. Apart from these assurances that have been given, it seems to me of the highest importance that these general elections should be held at as early a date as possible. Every delay produces a certain deterioration in our political atmosphere in the country. I think that at the very latest these elections should be held in the spring of 1951, that is round about March.

I trust that preparations are in full swing for these elections, that is to say preparation of electoral rolls, printing, etc. We propose very soon to appoint an Election Commissioner as required by the Constitution.[1]

A new complication has been pointed out. The decennial census will also be held early next year.[2] This, as you know, is a very big operation and absorbs a tremendous deal of energy. How far will this holding of the census conflict with the general elections? How can we avoid that conflict? I should like you to consider this point and let me know soon. I am quite sure in my mind that it will be exceedingly unfortunate and politically unwise for our elections to be postponed.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. The Central Election Commission had been set up on 25 January 1950 and on 6 March, Sukumar Sen was appointed Chief Election Commissioner.

2. It was held in February 1951.

6

New Delhi
16 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The outstanding event in India, during the last fortnight, has been the recrudescence of communal warfare on a fairly large-scale in East Bengal and Calcutta. You will remember my referring, in my last letter, to certain developments in Eastern Pakistan. This led to a large number of persons, mostly belonging to the depressed classes, migrating to India. The stories of atrocities in Khulna district and the plight of the refugees excited people in Calcutta and there was some trouble there in certain Muslim localities. Fairly large-scale arson and looting took place there and a number of people were killed. News of this made matters in Eastern Pakistan, which were bad enough already, much worse. In Dacca especially and elsewhere, there was considerable killing of Hindus and arson and looting. I shall not give you any details here, partly because they have been appearing in the press and partly because correct facts are not known yet. But it is clear that what happened in Eastern Bengal was on a bigger scale than we had hitherto since August 1947. What happened in Calcutta also was on a considerable scale, though, from such accounts as we have received, the persons killed were not many. The situation is still far from normal either in Eastern Pakistan or in Calcutta and there is always an apprehension of further trouble. About Eastern Pakistan, I cannot say much at this stage, as the news received is meagre. About Calcutta, I can say that while petty incidents continue to occur, the general situation is well in

hand. I think that the Chief Minister[1] and his Government in West Bengal have handled the situation with vigour and speed.[2] Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[3] went to Calcutta today. The main difficulty in Calcutta at present is the large number of Muslims who have left their houses and have congregated in other places for safety. Some of these *mohallas* have been burnt down. It is hoped, however, that most of these Muslims will return to their old houses.

2. What has occurred in East Bengal with its repercussions in Calcutta is serious enough. The only very partial consolation is that it might have been worse in the sense that it might have been more widespread and continuous. Of course, it is difficult to be certain yet as to what further consequences might occur, as the situation is still very abnormal. We appear to live somewhere near the top of a volcano and any spark tends to waken it into eruption. We succeed more or less in bottling it up again. But the volcano remains and we hear the rumblings of it. It is natural for our people to be excited at the news of terrible happenings in East Bengal, and then when retaliation takes place at this end, stories of it excite and inflame people on the other side. There is this action and reaction repeatedly and a vicious circle is created. How are we to get out of it?

3. We got caught in the circle of hatred and violence many years ago, when the old Muslim League started preaching Pakistan and the two-nation theory. That led to partition and the horrible consequences that followed. We had hoped that partition, painful and injurious as it was, would bring us out of that vicious circle. But then those terrible happenings took place in Pakistan and north India in August and September

1. B.C. Roy. For b. fn. see Vol. 1, p. 151.

2. B.C. Roy informed the West Bengal Assembly on 9 February that his Government had taken measures to control the situation in Calcutta by (1) entrusting patrolling of certain localities to the armed units, (2) banning processions and meetings, (3) imposition of curfew from dusk to dawn in some parts of the city, and (4) rounding up of anti-social elements.

3. For b.fn. see Vol.1, p. 455.

1947. We had paid a very heavy price. I have no doubt that it was the presence of Gandhiji at that critical hour that saved the situation not only in Calcutta and Bengal, but also, a little later, in northern India. But the wound was too deep and the healing process could not even begin, because of continuous irritation. We seem to go on paying the price and it is not quite clear when and how this business will end.

4. Some people, chiefly in the Hindu and Sikh communal organizations, talk about forcibly uniting the country again. Other people criticize the Government for what they call its weak policy towards Pakistan. It is not quite clear what policy, other than what we have been pursuing, they would like to be followed, unless it is war. If war is thrust upon us, as a self-respecting and proud nation we shall face it with all our strength, and because there is a possibility of it, so long as these troubles and tension continue, we have to be vigilant and prepared But most people do not realize what modern war means. It is a terrible affair and almost an unending thing, bringing ruin to all parties concerned. It may mean foreign intervention and in any event, it means saying goodbye, for a long period, to any real progress of the country. From a purely military point of view, I am not afraid of a war. But looking at the whole picture, I am convinced that it is our bounden duty to avoid war as far as possible. We have therefore pursued a policy of firmness and, at the same time, of avoidance of war. It was in pursuance of this policy that I suggested to Pakistan that we should agree to a joint declaration for the avoidance of war for the settlement of any disputes between us.[4] I have had no firm answer to this yet, and I doubt very much if Pakistan will agree.

5. There is another aspect to this question. If we have war or something approaching war, whatever the other consequences might be, it is clear that we shall not be able to help or rescue those vast numbers of people in East Bengal, who look to us for

4 See *ante*, pp. 6-7.

help. They will be completely bottled up in a violently hostile area and there will be no one to protect them. It has always to be remembered that every act of retaliation in one country or the other leads to a worsening of the situation and to greater danger to minority elements from the majority because passions are aroused. We get caught ever deeper in that vicious circle without being able to succour those who look to us for help. The only way to get out of that circle is not to do anything which is wrong both in principle and in its practical effects and which worsens the situation on the other side. Above all, it is essential that when such critical situations face us, we should remain calm and not allow ourselves to be rushed by the passion of the moment which does no good to anybody, least of all to ourselves.

6. Then there is the Kashmir situation. This matter is still before the Security Council. But apart from that, the leaders of Pakistan have been delivering aggressive and provocative speeches and constantly talking of war. Their press is even worse. It is not surprising that people in Pakistan, getting these one-sided, exaggerated, and even false stories, should get excited. An atmosphere is being created in Pakistan which progressively becomes more and more a war atmosphere. I doubt if the leaders of Pakistan want war because such a war would be exceedingly injurious to them. But, nevertheless, they are creating an atmosphere of war and are becoming more and more prisoners of their own words and exhortations. It is difficult for them to escape from this dilemma of their own creation. What then? I do not think that there will be any war between us and Pakistan, because there are so many factors against it, including our own attempt to avoid war. But we cannot rule out absolutely this possibility. On the other hand, if we escape a war with Pakistan during the next few months, then it is likely that things will tone down. No country and no people can live for long at that high pitch of excitement and war-mongering as Pakistan has indulged in. The coming summer is rather critical from many points of view. If we reach the late autumn without a major conflict, then I think it would be legitimate to say that conditions would slowly improve.

7. The result of all this is that we must be fully prepared for any possible development, but at the same time, we must avoid being dragged into the vicious circle of mutual retaliation. Our language should be restrained, and our actions firm and peaceful. Oddly enough, it is the people on our side who speak intemperately, who, in a sense, are helping Pakistan. Pakistan is facing enormous troubles, political and economic, in each one of its provinces. Their only hope is to cover up these difficulties and inner conflicts by playing upon the people's fears of India and directing them to other channels, namely, those of fear and hatred of India. That is an old tactic. I doubt, however, if it can succeed. But, in its very failure, it may bring disastrous consequences, if we play into their hands.

8. The trade deadlock between Pakistan and India and the economic consequences, that have flown from it, continue. Now that the International Monetary Fund has made Pakistan a member,[5] there might be a way out in some form or other. The International Monetary Fund will have to fix the exchange value of the Pakistan rupee. We are also going to have some kind of a conference in Delhi with Pakistan representatives regarding this trade impasse.[6]

9. The Prime Minister of Nepal will be visiting Delhi within a few days for important talks with us. India has always naturally been interested in Nepal. We have no desire to interfere in its independence, but facts of geography compel both of us to have special relations with each other. In the present context, with the coming of Communist China, all kinds of new problems arise. As I wrote to you in my last letter, we think that an essential and urgent step is the introduction of adequate reforms in Nepal.

10. We are still going on arguing with the French authorities about Pondicherry, etc. It is not easy to deal with these French

5. On 14 February 1950.
6. The proposed conference did not take place at this time.

authorities. There is a possibility of the proposed referendum being postponed. We have made it clear that unless certain steps are taken to ensure that the referendum is a fair one, we cannot accept it. As a matter of fact, it is quite inevitable that these French possessions should come to India, as we can never tolerate with equanimity the presence of these foreign islands in India.

11. The same questions, with even greater emphasis, arise in Goa. From all accounts, Goa is an extreme backwater from every point of view. We have frequent pin-pricks. We have deliberately postponed raising this question of Goa, as we wanted to deal with the French possessions first. But the time has come when we should make clear our policy to the Portuguese Government and we propose to do so.[7]

12. In South Africa an agreement has been arrived at to hold a round table conference.[8] This agreement is certainly a sign of the parties trying to avoid disagreement. But the basic differences remain and will no doubt come out at the proposed round table conference. It is right, however, that we should make every effort to find a peaceful solution of a difficult problem. The problem of Indians in South Africa becomes even more difficult because it is, in a sense, related to, or rather it affects, the vaster problem of the Africans. The South African Government is afraid that any concessions given to Indians will be demanded by the Africans. For our part, we certainly want the Africans to go ahead and we do not want to

7. In its first *aide-memoire* sent to the Portuguese Foreign Minister on 27 February 1950, the Government of India suggested that once the principle of reunion of these possessions with India was accepted through negotiations, "ways and means could be devised by friendly consultations between the Governments of Portugal and India," to implement it. To this the Portuguese Government replied that it was "unable to discuss, and much less accept, the solution proposed by the Indian Government."

8. The Indian, Pakistani and South African delegates meeting in Cape Town recommended that a round table conference be convened to explore means to settle the Indian question in South Africa.

come in the way of their progress. It is their country and their continent and we seek no special rights against them. In Africa, the situation becomes slowly more and more tense and there have been occasional riots and small uprisings of the Africans. Fortunately, our relations with the Africans are on the whole good.

13. Behind all these national and international troubles and conflicts lies a world situation marching, sometimes in a leisurely fashion, and at other times more rapidly, to major crisis. For the moment, Europe is relatively settled down and free from immediate crisis. The scene changes to the Far East. In the Far East, the major fact of this half-century is the emergence of Communist China. This China has made a treaty with Russia.[9] That treaty does not necessarily signify that China has become a satellite country. It does signify that in foreign affairs especially, the Soviets and China hold together. Meanwhile, the Kuomintang Government, established in Formosa, is bombing Shanghai frequently. However much they may bomb and cause damage there -- and this damage is largely to buildings and factories owned by foreigners—it is not at all clear how this weakens in any way the Communist regime in China. The U.S. policy is rather complicated and somewhat

9. On 14 February 1950, a Sino-Soviet treaty of "friendship, alliance and mutual aid" was signed in Moscow "in order to prevent, with joint efforts, the recurrence of Japanese imperialism and any renewed aggression instigated by Japan or other nations." The signatories agreed "to negotiate and agree on all international problems of importance which are relevant to the joint interests of China and the U.S.S.R.," and undertook to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity and not to interfere in each other's internal affairs. The Soviet Union also agreed to repudiate the treaty of 14 August 1945 negotiated with the Kuomintang Government to restore the Chang Chun railway and rights over Port Arthur and Dairen and to grant long-term credits worth $300 million to China.

contradictory.[10] Indirectly they are helping the old Nationalist Government of China in Formosa, and yet, they express a desire not to intervene in Chinese affairs.

14. In Indo-China also the recognition of Ho Chi Minh's Government by Russia and China and of Bao Dai's Government by U.S.A. and U.K., etc., lays the seeds of major conflict.

15. The world is thus drifting towards major conflicts and possibly war. We hear of a far more terrible weapon of destruction than even the atom bomb. This is the hydrogen bomb and scientists tell us that the use of it may mean such vast destruction as to put an end to all civilized existence. It is odd to think that humanity, after the wonderful progress that it has achieved, should find its culmination in the hydrogen bomb and all that it represents. We in India cannot control or greatly affect these elemental forces that are moving great nations. At best we can try not to do the wrong thing and not to encourage this tendency of war. What success we may have in this attempt, it is difficult to say. It is at least satisfying to think that we have the strength of mind and purpose to try to steer along the straight and narrow path.

16. In our domestic sphere, there is, I think, some slight but marked improvement in the economic situation, more especially in regard to food prices. There is also visible a gradual awakening of industry. On the other hand, there is much still which is disquieting. Above all, what troubles me is the state of the Congress organization. I am not writing, for the

10. On 5 January 1950, President Truman had announced in Washington that U.S.A. would not provide military aid or advice to the Chinese forces in Taiwan. The Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, added that the President's announcement was a proof that the United States would keep the promise not to meddle in the internal affairs of China. Truman, at a news conference on 12 January, reaffirmed his "hands-off Formosa policy." But the United States continued to support the Nationalist Government in Taiwan, opposed People's Republic of China's admission to the United Nations and would not recognize the new Government.

present, as a Congressman, thinking of the party to which I have had the honour to belong. I am considering this matter from the larger viewpoint of the nation. Because our Governments are essentially Congress Governments, what affects the Congress affects those Governments and the country. There is going to be a meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Delhi very soon.[11] But that will largely confine itself to certain constitutional changes.[12] It seems to me imperative that we should hold a full session of the Congress soon. We cannot pull up otherwise. Our committees have become stale and small groups fight for power and influence within them, forgetting the larger good. A full session of the Congress may awaken the organization.

17. For much the same reason I think that the sooner we have general elections under the new Constitution for Parliament and the provincial legislatures, the better. I am very anxious that this should not be delayed. The earliest we can hold them is the end of this year or the beginning of the next. That should be the latest date also and I trust that every State will keep this in view. It would be exceedingly unfortunate if, for some reason or other, these elections have to be postponed even by a few months. We hope to appoint a Central Election Commissioner soon.

18. I am disturbed and distressed by the repeated firings that take place in various parts of India, sometimes inside prison and sometimes outside. I am not referring to what has been happening in Calcutta, because a serious situation arose there and it had to be controlled by all the means at our disposal in order to avoid any spreading of it. Elsewhere, many of these conflicts have been due to the set policy of the Communists to

11. On 17 February 1950.

12. On 17 February, the All India Congress Committee amended the Congress constitution to disfranchise many members as part of an exercise to weed out corrupt elements from the Congress ranks and keep the party in touch with the masses. The question of revitalizing the Congress also figured prominently.

create trouble by all means at their disposal. That challenge has to be met, wherever it is made. In meeting it, however, we have to take care that we do not play into the hands of those very Communists who want to discredit our Governments. Apart from the Communists, other cases have occurred of firing on the public. I can well believe that there was sufficient justification for these. Yet the fact remains that this kind of thing is creating a bad reputation for us and making our police force unpopular with the public. It would be a tragedy if the old feeling against the police was revived in the public. I should like you to give thought to this matter because I fear it is a growing danger. Perhaps you might consult your colleagues as well as your principal officers as to how best to deal with this situation. Law and order have to be maintained. But at the same time public opinion has to be satisfied and kept in harmony with Government. One suggestion I would like to make to you, and indeed I have made it previously, is that in every major case of firing there should be a proper enquiry other than a departmental enquiry. That is a demand which is always made on behalf of the public and we have ourselves made it frequently in the past. It would be worthwhile to develop a convention to this effect, because then it will not mean selecting particular cases for an enquiry.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7

New Delhi
27 February, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

You are no doubt following events in East and West Bengal and you must have seen the statement I made in Parliament.[1] I need not say how full of danger the situation is. I am still prepared to think that we might get over this danger and in any event we must make every possible effort to do so. It is true that one-sided effort may not be enough if the other party insists on misbehaving. Nevertheless, even one-sided effort goes some way and influences the other party's behaviour. It influences third parties and that is to be considered also.

I find that the most amazing lies are being circulated by radio and newspapers in Pakistan about what happened in West Bengal. This puts me on enquiry as to how far rumours and stories we hear about events in East Bengal might not be greatly exaggerated. It is true that we have enough information at our disposal to show that conditions in East Bengal have been very bad. But we also have been able to trace many rumours spreading here which turned out to be completely baseless. We must, therefore, be very careful about believing rumours and vague reports so long as they are not confirmed. Gradually ou

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. In his statement of 23 February 1950, Nehru traced the genesis of the serious communal situation in East and West Bengal and referred to his efforts to seek Pakistan's co-operation in ascertaining the actual position in East Bengal and devising methods by which peace and order could be established there.

sources of information are growing. Our High Commissioner[2] in Pakistan and our Deputy High Commissioner[3] in Dacca have both been touring in East Bengal and we are getting reports from them. These reports indicate that the minority community in East Bengal had a very bad time about the middle of this month. At the same time, they show that the reports we received were often exaggerated. In the same way, exaggerated and false reports in East Bengal have excited people there, and so the vicious circle goes on.

We must be prepared for all contingencies. But it is quite essential that we should all remain calm and collected and not lose our sense of proportion. Once we lose that, we become incapable of judging a situation or taking proper action. Our responsibility is great and we dare not become just tools of momentary passion, ours or the people's. We have to control them as far as we can and direct public opinion into safer channels.

I would suggest to you especially to keep in touch with editors of newspapers in your State. It is always a good thing to send for them and have informal off-the-record talks with them. Give them such real news as you possess. At the same time, make it perfectly clear that we cannot tolerate the spread of rumour and vague allegation or the deliberate fostering of communal hatred. Indeed, action should be taken immediately where this takes place. We can take no risk in such matters. In my statement before Parliament, I congratulated the Indian press generally on the restraint they had shown during the previous two weeks. These congratulations were, I think, justified, at any rate in so far as a large number of newspapers were concerned. They were not justified in regard to some of them. I have noticed since that there is a tendency to forget this restraint and some cartoons and news displays and comments have been bad. I think you should point this out to your editors

2. Sita Ram. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 278.
3. S.K. Basu, For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 227.

in friendly but firm language and make it perfectly clear that you will take necessary action, if, in your opinion, they give publicity to anything which might cause trouble or worsen the situation. You should seek their co operation in controlling a difficult situation and explain to them that our capacity for any effective action is terribly weakened if errors are committed on our side.

There was a *hartal* in Calcutta yesterday.[4] This was organized very irresponsibly by some people. The Chief Minister of West Bengal has rightly condemned this *hartal.* In the tension of today, any person calling for a *hartal* gets a following, if for no other reason than that of fear. Any attempt at a *hartal* brings danger of trouble and conflict, as young men go about forcing people to close their shops. *Hartals* should therefore be sternly discouraged.

I had news from the Chief Minister of Bihar[5] about very provocative speeches delivered by a prominent member[6] of the Hindu Mahasabha. I am glad that the Chief Minister took immediate action. Bihar is especially an inflammable province in such matters. We had trouble enough there in November 1946.

Early in March we shall have *Holi.* This is always a rather difficult time from the communal point of view. When passions have been roused, it is quite easy for people to misbehave and, as we know, even a slight incident may grow to big dimensions. Therefore, every care should be taken during this period.

About the same time the Hindu Mahasabha have declared, I think, March 5th, as an East Bengal Day. I do not know what

4. The call for *hartal* was given by the All Bengal Minorities Committee to protest against communal incidents which had occurred in East Bengal.

5. Sri Krishna Sinha (1887-1961). A prominent Congressman of Bihar; joined the non-cooperation movement in 1920; Chief Minister of Bihar, 1937-39 and 1946-61.

6. V.G. Deshpande

their programme for the day is. But it is clear that this celebration is full of dangerous possibilities. Communal troubles on a big scale have often happened in the past by a declaration of such days and meetings and processions held then. Violent speeches are delivered, people get excited, and then go and do damage. I would beg of you therefore to take every precaution to check public meetings and processions of this kind.

It has come to my knowledge that the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. are playing an important part in the spreading of rumours and in generally inciting people. Their activities therefore should be carefully watched.

I have also been informed, though I have no evidence, that there is a possibility of some mischief-makers from Pakistan helping to create trouble in India.

The next few weeks, and more especially the next few days, are full of dangerous possibilities, and we have to be on our guard all the time. I am therefore writing to you on this subject. You will appreciate that the possible consequences of anything wrong being done are very far-reaching and catastrophic.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8

New Delhi
1 March, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

We are passing through a difficult period when developments in Bengal, both East and West, overshadow other matters. Normally this is the budget period when both the Central Government and the States are busy with framing budget estimates. This business of the budget involves the consideration of high policies. This would thus be a fitting time for a review of our economic situation and a consideration of the way we are going. But all such matters have been rather pushed out of the public mind by events in Bengal.

2. A day or two ago I sent you a letter [1] drawing your attention to the next few critical days, because of *Holi* and the declaration of the Hindu Mahasabha to observe an East Bengal Day on the 5th of March. It is the height of unwisdom to have demonstrations at this stage about what is happening in East Bengal. But the Hindu Mahasabha has never been noted for its wisdom. It has a remarkable way of always saying and doing the wrong thing. That wrong thing is not noticed or it creates little effect in normal circumstances. But when people are excited and their minds are full of hatred and anger, then any lead from the Hindu Mahasabha may lead to mischief. There is plenty of inflammable material all round and a spark may set it alight. In West Bengal especially, deep passions have been aroused and it is much to the credit of the Government there, and more especially the Chief Minister, that the situation has been under control. We must remember however that no

1. See *ante*, item 7.

situation can long be controlled by police or military action unless there is a large body of public support. I think that there is some realization among thinking persons in West Bengal and elsewhere that we should function in a restrained way and not precipitate any action which might lead to grave consequences. But most people do not think or reason logically and are moved by the passion or prejudice of the moment. Some people go much further. They deliberately try to create trouble so as to bring about that very crisis that we try to avoid. I know that there are such groups. If the atmosphere is sympathetic to such groups, then Government machinery cannot do much. I would suggest to you therefore to be very vigilant during the next few weeks, and more especially during the next ten days or so, and not tolerate any action which might lead to communal trouble and conflict. Those who are taking a lead in exciting people should be definitely warned and checked. The newspapers, of course, have a vital role to play and it is desirable to keep in close touch with them and tell them what the position is.

3. We are now getting more accurate information about East Bengal. Our High Commissioner in Pakistan, as well as our Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca, have visited a number of places in East Bengal and their reports are coming in. From these reports, it might be said that events in East Bengal were bad and that these disturbances were of a widespread character. At the same time the figures we get are, on the whole, less than those previously received. There has been, as was natural, a good deal of exaggeration in the reports coming to us from private sources. It must be remembered that refugees flee from a situation which they consider as full of danger to them, and are not the best witnesses, even though some of them might have been eye-witnesses of a particular occurrence. They were and are much too excited and worked up to see an event in proper perspective, and in any event they only see a small part of the picture.

4. The basic problem today is how to find full security for the minorities in East and West Bengal. I have no doubt that

conditions in West Bengal for the minorities are far better than those in East Bengal. At the same time, it is idle to deny that Muslims in West Bengal or to some extent, elsewhere, have not that full sense of security that they should have. In the very nature of things, they are full of apprehension about their future. It is not much good giving them good advice or warning because we have to deal with an odd psychological situation. Even appeals for their loyalty, though desirable in themselves, have little meaning in this context. On the whole, the Muslims of India have behaved well. Some of them had behaved badly. But we must distinguish between the actual evil-doers and the majority of the Muslim population.

5. I have little doubt that we can control the situation in West Bengal, provided there is also some control in East Bengal. If East Bengal remains in a state of dangerous insecurity and incidents happen there, then there are bound to be repercussions in the West. The opposite of this is equally true. It is natural and right for us to exercise all the pressure we can on East Bengal or Pakistan. But, in the nature of things, this external pressure does not go very far, unless it takes the form of some kind of coercion, when it depends on a balance of various factors. One thing, however, should be under our control, and that is, the situation in various parts of India. I am quite sure that if we can control this adequately, we shall not only get out of the vicious circle of retaliation on each other, but also powerfully affect the other side. At the same time, we shall be in a position to take any further step more effectively than otherwise.

6. We have had an exceedingly bad foreign press in regard to both Bengal and Kashmir. It is very unfortunate that this should be so and it may be that our publicity apparatus abroad is not good enough. But ultimately public opinion abroad is influenced far more by other factors, state policies, etc., as well as the despatches of foreign correspondents in India and Pakistan. Recent criticisms in the foreign press, notably in the

U.S.A.[2] and the U.K.,[3] have been grossly unfair to us both factually and otherwise. An attempt is made to put us in the wrong even in matters when, to our minds, blame very largely attaches to the other party. That other party is, I regret to say, completely unscrupulous. They believe in piling up lie after lie after the Hitler fashion in the hope that some of these will certainly stick. I am afraid we are not angels and we make our mistakes also. But there is a major difference. The old policy of the Muslim League, which is being continued by the leaders of Pakistan, was one of deliberate fostering of hatred and the spirit of violence. Our leaders in the past followed an opposite policy, considering it both right and expedient. But some people imagine that in certain circumstances we should give up that policy and copy the methods of our opponents. I am quite sure that would be completely wrong and foolish, and yet there is a growing body of opinion in the country, and even within the Congress, which wants us to do that.[4] I hope we shall be able to resist that. But inevitably our capacity for any other action weakens because of these diverse trends. We fail to some extent because we do not follow one clear policy.

7. If India is to progress, we must absorb, and make our own the various minorities in India, and notably the Muslims. The view of the Hindu Mahasabha and other communal organizations is opposed to this. I am certain that the Hindu Mahasabha policy is fatal for India. Their talk of putting an end to partition is foolish in the extreme. We cannot do so, and

2. For example, the *New York Times* wrote on 6 February 1950 that "India seized Hyderabad because it was racially an overwhelming Hindu state with a Muslim prince. She is claiming Kashmir, an overwhelming Mohammedan state racially, because the Hindu ruler signed an instrument of accession to India. It looks like getting the best of both the worlds....If India is in good faith she will accept U.N. mediation."

3. The *Economist* of 18 February 1950 had blamed India for "obstructing the holding of an internationally supervised plebiscite" because India "really has no confidence that the vote could go in her favour."

4. At the A.I.C.C. session on 19 February 1950, several members from Assam West Bengal and the Punjab demanded immediate and drastic action against Pakistan to save the minorities there.

we should not try to do so. If by any chance partition was ended, while present passions last on either side, it would mean tremendous new problems for us to face. We would be worse of than ever. Therefore, there must be no thought of putting an end to partition and having what is called *Akhand Bharat*.

8. There is a tendency among some of us to demand loyalty from the Muslims in India and to condemn tendencies amongst them which may be pro-Pakistani. Such tendencies, of course, are wrong and have to be condemned. But I think it is wrong to lay stress always on the loyalty on behalf of the Muslims of India. Loyalty is not produced to order or by fear. It comes as a natural growth from circumstances which make loyalty not only a sentiment which appeals to one but also profitable in the long run. We have to produce conditions which lead to this sentiment being produced. In any event, criticism and cavilling at minorities does not help.

9. Some people talk vaguely but none the less rather aggressively of war.[5] I think it would be a disaster of the first magnitude for us to have war on something that necessarily takes the shape of a communal issue. War is disastrous in any event, but much more so when it is communal or racial or something like that. It is true that there are some things worse than war and there are occasions when there is no alternative left except war. It is also true that whether we want it or not, war may be thrust upon us, and so every prudent statesman will keep in readiness, and in full preparation, for every eventuality. But that does not mean talking and encouraging war sentiment.

10. East and West Bengal have innumerable personal contacts. Large numbers of people on one side have close

5. For example, J.B. Kripalani, in an article published in *Vigil* of 25 February, pleaded for India adopting a firmer attitude towards Pakistan if the communal situation in East Bengal was to be saved from further deterioration. He wrote: "A bully can least afford to drive things to a breaking point. But if it does, those who feel that they have right on their side must be prepared for war or martyrdom, but never for cowardly submission."

relatives or friends on the other, and so if anything happens on one side, it brings a personal sorrow to the other, apart from other consequences. If a demand comes to us for protection, and more especially from women and children, who are in danger of death or worse, it is difficult and ultimately impossible to remain unaffected by it and not to do something to help. But to take rash action is no help and may even make the situation worse for them.

11. It is difficult to think of long-term policies when the situation is an ever-changing one. The only real long-term policy we can have is to consolidate India by making all the minorities in the country feel completely at home in the State, and indeed by removing all sense of difference from the political point of view between the so-called majorities and minorities. That will, no doubt, take some time. But that is the only goal to aim at and every step taken must keep that in view. An immediate short-term policy must lay stress on Governments on either side guaranteeing, in so far as they can, security for minorities. This means, in the present context, giving compensation to sufferers and rehabilitating those who have been driven out of their houses during the recent disturbances. If they have migrated, they should be invited to go back to their homes. Where homes have been destroyed, Governments must help in providing new homes. It is essential also that the guilty should be punished and should be made to feel that it does not pay to create disturbance and to loot and kill. Abducted women must be our particular care and should be recovered. Forced conversions cannot be recognized. It may be that the Pakistan Government does not give full effect to this policy even though it might agree to it. What we should do in the circumstances will have to be considered step by step. In my correspondence with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, I have laid stress on this approach.[6] While, in a general way, he has

6. On 17 February 1950, Nehru again suggested to Liaquat Ali Khan that while a joint commission should hold enquiry into the communal situation in East Bengal, they both should visit the affected areas to restore confidence among the people.

accepted some of these suggestions, I have had no proper answer from him yet.

12. Looking further into this matter, it seems that if minorities are to remain and function where they are, they must be represented in Governments and elsewhere. It is wrong in every way for a large section of the population to feel that it has no voice in Government or in the Services. It was certainly a mistake in the Punjab to separate the Services communally after partition.

13. I shall be going to Calcutta in a few days' time.[7] It is my intention to spend some considerable time in West Bengal and, if possible, to visit East Bengal also. I may not be able to remain there for long at one time, but I shall try to go there repeatedly, if necessary.[8] I need hardly tell you that I attach the greatest importance to the solution of this Bengal problem and I am prepared to give as much time as possible to it.

14. The Kashmir issue is being argued in the Security Council, even though the Soviet representative has kept away from these meetings because of the China issue.[9] This China representation in the Security Council has become farcical because the old Nationalist Government of China has been completely driven out of Continental China. The Soviet position in regard to this matter in the Security Council is logically correct and we have supported it by our vote.[10] But

7. From 6 to 9 March 1950.

8 On 23 February, the Prime Minister of Pakistan rejected Nehru's suggestions as he felt that "it was not likely to produce the desired results."

9. On 10 January the Soviet delegate informed the Security Council that they would take no part in the Council's deliberations or in those of the other organs of the United Nations where the representatives of the Republic of China were present.

10. The Soviet resolution in the Security Council on 13 January 1950 for the removal of the Nationalist Chinese delegation was rejected with the United States, France, China, Cuba, Ecuador and Egypt voting against it, the Soviet Union, India and Yugoslavia voting in its favour, and Great Britain and Norway abstaining.

other countries have preferred an illogical course for other reasons, and hence the Security Council, and indeed the United Nations, have to face a deadlock from which it is not easy to find a way out. The whole future of the United Nations is imperilled by this question.

15. Some of the speeches delivered in the Security Council have been very much opposed to our point of view. In particular, the speech delivered by the U.K. representative there was offensive and had an element of threat in it.[11] It is astonishing that a deliberate attempt should be made not to face the real issues and try to bypass all the major points that we have raised. Our position has been made difficult by these deliberate attempts on behalf of certain countries. Nevertheless, that position is quite clear in our minds. We cannot accept the McNaughton proposals[12] in whatever shape they may come, and we shall then face consequences, if necessary. The resolution[13] before the Security Council is not quite clear in regard to some matters and we have asked for elucidation.[14]

16. I am quite sure that the Kashmir matters, as well as other conflicts between us and Pakistan, would have been much nearer solution in a peaceful way if certain foreign powers had not continuously encouraged Pakistan in some of its wrong

11. Sir Alexander Cadogan said in the Security Council on 25 February 1950 that "if this Council is to function effectively now, and in the days to come, we must insist that its authority be not made to be disregarded or ignored."

12. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol 1, pp 515-516.

13. On 24 February 1950, the representatives of Cuba, Norway, the United States and the United Kingdom recommended, through a draft resolution, that India and Pakistan, following General McNaughton's proposals, make immediate arrangements for demilitarization and agree to the appointment of an U.N. representative in whom the same powers as exercised earlier by the U.N. Commission would be vested and who would appoint a plebiscite administrator at an appropriate time.

14. India sought clarification on the question of demilitarization, Pakistan's occupation of the northern areas of the state and on the choice of the mediator.

courses. The foreign press has also been unfavourable to us. Our foreign publicity machinery is unfortunately not very effective and should be remodelled. But the real causes are deeper and have something to do with world policies of various groups.

17. You will remember that in the President's speech on the opening day of Parliament, reference was made to a reduction of military expenditure. After careful thought we had come to the conclusion that every effort should be made to reduce this expenditure. It is, in the long run, impossible for us to spend 50% of our Central budget on Defence. All progress is stopped by this top heavy expenditure. Recent events, however, have made it very difficult for us to make any substantial reduction, as we had hoped. Nevertheless, in the budget presented yesterday, there is some reduction. Last year's actuals were 170 crores for Defence. This year the figure is 168. This includes a new item of 8 crores for the State armies. If we exclude this, then the reduction of 10 crores is noticeable. Of course, as our Finance Minister[15] pointed out,[16] we have to keep vigilant and we shall have to spend more on Defence if necessity requires it. This reduction in the present year, in spite of our difficulties and crisis, shows how earnest we are in the matter of reduction of Defence expenditure.

18. I think you will agree with me that the budget statement presented by Dr. Matthai last evening reveals a situation which is certainly not as bad as most people thought. Indeed, there are many pointers which indicate that we are on the upgrade. We are not out of the wood and we shall have to be very careful. The budget has been cautiously framed and does not represent any major new policy. But you will have observed that the Planning Commission has been announced, and in view of the importance of this Planning Commission I have consented to be the Chairman. The Commission is a strong one

15. John Matthai. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 133.
16. In his speech on the budget on 27 February 1950.

and we propose to give it the highest importance and status. It is for this Commission to take an overall view of the situation and help in framing policies and fixing targets. The Commission is not going to make just a theoretical approach to the problems that beset us, but will, I hope, lay down practical approaches and objectives. Probably there will be concentration on what can and should be done in the near future, apart from the larger plan.

19. The Commission may not formally begin its work for another few months because some of its members are at present carrying on other responsible duties. But even before it so begins functioning, preparation for its work will begin, and you may be addressed by it. It is obvious that no plan can succeed without the closest co-operation between the Centre and the States. Your Government's help, therefore, is essential. It may be desirable for you to appoint planning officers or boards in your State which would keep in contact and constant touch with the Central Planning Commission.

20. As you must know, the Congress Working Committee appointed a planning committee[17] under the chairmanship of Shri Govind Ballabh Pant.[18] It is hoped that there will be full contact and co-operation between the Planning Commission and this committee. We have to think not only of Government policies, but of how to bring in large masses of people to co-operate in furtherance of national policies of reconstruction and development. In this work the Congress organization can be of the utmost value.

21. The elections in the United Kingdom have resulted in a balance of parties which is unfortunate from the point of view

17. The committee was appointed on 17 February 1950 to draw up immediately a short-term programme of work for a period of one year which could later be a part of the five-year plan. The members were Govind Ballabh Pant, Jagjivan Ram, Gulzari Lal Nanda, N.G. Ranga and Shankarrao Deo.

18. For b.fn. see Vol 1, p. 383.

of any stable policies being pursued.[19] It is difficult to say how the situation will develop. These crises put democratic and parliamentary institutions to the test. The British have a powerful tradition in favour of these institutions and I am sure they will make good. The sympathies of a vast majority of people in India have all along been with the Labour Party in the United Kingdom. In regard to some matters we have differed greatly with them, but there has been a great deal of admiration in India for the brave way in which they have faced their domestic problems. In regard to foreign policies, and more particularly in regard to the U.K.'s policy about Kashmir, there has been a marked divergence between the Indian point of view and the U.K. Government's. Nevertheless, from the larger point of world peace and democratic and social progress, people in India certainly desired the success of the Labour Government. So far as India is concerned, there need be no apprehension that any party in the United Kingdom or any Government is going to interfere with us. We are an independent nation and we shall go our own way, as far as possible in co-operation with others. It is true that certain elements in the Conservative Party in England have been very anti-Indian in the past, and even in the recent past they have continued to do propaganda against us. But the time is past now when any Government in England can interfere or go back on anything that has been done. Indeed, Mr. Winston Churchill[20] and some of his colleagues assured me of this when I was in England last.

22. We have recently had the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal. Advantage was taken of this visit to discuss a treaty of

19. The Labour Party was returned with 315 seats against 297 seats for the Conservatives and supporters, 10 for the Liberals, and 2 for the Irish Nationalists.

20. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 168.

friendship[21] and a trade treaty.[22] The treaty of friendship has been agreed upon subject to confirmation by the respective Governments. Probably there will be no difficulty about the trade treaty either. The treaty of friendship, of course, does not mean that we approve of the political or social structure of Nepal at the present moment. Unfortunately, this structure is completely feudal and backward and we have been laying the greatest stress during the past two or three years on substantial reforms being introduced. I regret to say that practically no results have been reached thus far in spite of this pressure. We have pointed out to the Prime Minister of Nepal that in view of new developments in Asia, it is quite essential for a change in methods of governments. It is not our desire to interfere in Nepal in any way, but we cannot be unaffected by something that has its repercussions outside Nepal. Of course, for many years past, long before we took charge of the affairs of government, we sympathized with the reform movement in Nepal. We continue to do so because that is our general outlook and policy. As a Government, however, we are more concerned with reactions to events in Nepal. I am sure that if adequate steps in favour of reform are not taken in Nepal, there will be continuing trouble there and people will look elsewhere for help. That is bad for Nepal and for India.

23. We have no formal military commitments in regard to Nepal nor do we desire any. But it is perfectly clear that in the event of any aggressor attacking Nepal, we cannot remain indifferent. From that point of view, defence of Nepal becomes defence of India. I do not think it at all likely or even possible for such aggression to take place against Nepal and therefore I

21. According to the treaty signed in Kathmandu on 31 July 1950, both Governments agreed that there should be "everlasting peace and friendship" between the two countries. They also agreed to consult each other and devise effective counter-measures to meet any threat by a foreign aggressor.

22. This treaty of ten articles was aimed at "facilitating and furthering" trade and commerce between the two countries. It established Nepal's right to trade with third countries through Indian ports.

am not worried about it. But I wanted to make clear to you what our general policy is.

24. In regard to the French possessions in India, the matter drags on in a very unsatisfactory way. The referendum has been postponed and we have agreed to that because the conditions for a fair referendum have been lacking. In Goa, and in Portugal, some consternation was caused by my reply in Parliament [23] that Goa must inevitably join India in the future.[24] The Portuguese Government still lives in some medieval age and appears to be ignorant of the changes that have taken place in the world. It is not our intention to solve the Goan problem by any aggressive methods. But our policy remains clear.

25. Shri Hriday Nath Kunzru has returned from South Africa after the preliminary conference. Something has been achieved at this conference in so far as a formula for the agenda of the round table conference has been agreed to. This is no great progress, but it is something achieved. Meanwhile, conditions in South Africa and in other parts of Africa become more and more difficult from the racial point of view. The Africans are no longer content to remain where they are and they demand privileges and equality of treatment. There have been racial riots recently.[25] These were not primarily against Indians, though some Indian shops suffered. This question of Africa is perhaps the major question of the next generation. Our policy in Africa and elsewhere is a friendly one with the people there, i.e., the Africans. We have declared repeatedly that we do not

23. On 6 February 1950.

24. For example, *Dietro da Manha*, the Portuguese Government's newspaper, criticizing Nehru's statement, wrote that "Portugal would not give up or rent any of her territory."

25. On 13 February 1950, widespread rioting broke out in the suburbs of Johannesburg, Cape Town and a Western Native Township. Twelve Europeans and seven Africans were seriously wounded and a number of Indian shops burnt.

wish to exploit them or come in the way of their progress in any way. On the whole, there has been improvement in Indo-African relations, more especially in East Africa, where our representative[26] has done good work in this respect.

26. At a recent meeting of our Cabinet, attention was drawn to the disabilities imposed on labour under certain provisions contained in the Maintenance of Public Order Acts in various States. The question arose while we were considering the Orissa Maintenance of Public Order Amendment Bill. I think it is very necessary that we should not mix up the labour question with other questions of public order. There has been much criticism in foreign countries about our policy generally in regard to public safety legislation. That legislation is unfortunately necessary because of violent anti-social elements in the country, both Communist and communal. But we should try to separate labour from this as far as possible.

27. Certain restrictions on essential services were introduced during the war. Though conditions are far from normal even now in many respects, it cannot be said that war-time emergency still exists. We must, therefore, interfere as little as possible with terms and conditions of employment of workers and avoid curtailing vital trade union rights or rights of personal liberty. If there is such curtailment, the result is illegal strikes and an encouragement of defiance on the part of labour and disrespect for law. The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 contains a number of legislative safeguards necessary to ensure that essential services function uninterruptedly. This should be enough.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

26. Apa B. Pant (b.1912). Prime Minister, Aundh state, 1944-48; Indian Commissioner, British East Africa, 1948-54; Political Officer, Sikkim and Bhutan, 1955-61; Ambassador to Indonesia, 1961-64, Norway, 1964-66, Egypt, 1966-69; High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, 1969-72; Ambassador to Italy, 1972-76.

9

New Delhi
19 March, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

There has been some delay in my sending you this letter because of my visit to Calcutta.[1] This was my second visit within a few days. This in itself will indicate to you how my mind is occupied by the grave situation that has arisen in Bengal. The present is serious enough, but the future consequences of what is happening today, or what might happen, are still more perilous.

2. It might be said that there has been no major incident in East or West Bengal during the last three weeks or so. Of course, we cannot be sure of what might have happened or is happening in some remote village in East Bengal. I can only report from such information as we get from various sources. But I think that it would be true to say that no major incident has happened in either of the Bengals. Outside Bengal, however, there were repercussions in some towns of the U.P.[2] during the *Holi* period as well as in Bombay and some other places[3] in India. In Assam something big happened. The tribal people, incited, it is said, by some refugees, swooped down on the Muslim residents of part of Goalpara and Barpeta. There was very little, hardly any, killing. But there was a good deal of arson and a large number, probably 40,000 or more, of Muslims were driven out of their homes and pushed into East

1. From 14 to 16 March 1950.
2. There were disturbances in Aligarh, Moradabad, Pilibhit and Bareilly.
3. At Katni and Kamptee in Madhya Pradesh.

Pakistan. This has been a particularly deplorable occurrence. All these occurrences in various parts of India are the consequence of Bengal happenings which have filled people with anger.

3. Travelling conditions between East and West Bengal have become relatively easier, though they are still restricted and full of difficulties. This has resulted in a continuous stream of Hindu refugees from East Bengal into West Bengal. A considerable number of Muslims have also left Calcutta for East Bengal and some have gone to the U.P. and Bihar. This inflow and outflow continue and are likely to continue unless something else happens. It may be said that hardly a Hindu in East Bengal at present feels any sense of security and he is desirous of coming away. When we remember that the Hindus in East Bengal still number over 12 millions, the extent of the problem may be realized. It seems to me clear that it is impossible for us to go on receiving month after month, year after year, this enormous population, uprooted from their homes. On the other hand, it is equally clear that we cannot refuse entry to a person who looks to us for succour in his or her distress. If these great migrations continue, they will upset the whole social fabric of India, apart from putting an intolerable burden on us.

4. The only right way to solve this is to create conditions which give full security to the minorities to live in their homes wherever they might be. Assurances about this have frequently been given at Inter-Dominion Conferences and the like, and indeed the partition of India presumed such an assurance. Nevertheless, the Hindu minority has been progressively squeezed out of Pakistan. How then are we to meet this problem – not only the immediate problem of giving security but the more basic problem out of which this immediate problem has arisen? I think we are justified in thinking that this basic problem has arisen from that communal and narrow outlook which has led to the conception of an Islamic State in Pakistan. If that conception continues, its consequences also continue.

5. I am merely mentioning to you some of the important aspects of this very great problem. I shall not venture to suggest what we should do in the present to meet it, because any decision that we might take is a difficult one and we are giving it the fullest consideration. You must know that some of the remedies suggested are far-reaching and dangerous. Yet the mere fact that they have been suggested shows the deep-seated nature of the disease. Meanwhile, we have made some arrangements for the looking-after of the refugees that are coming from East Bengal. We have also strengthened our defences on the Bengal border.

6. Thinking of this Bengal problem, as well as all that has gone before it and might possibly follow after it, I am filled with deep distress and a sense of failure. All the ideals we have stood for in the past seem gradually to fade away and new urges and emotions fill the people. Circumstances drive us onward from one position to another, each further away from what we used to consider our anchor. We cannot run away from the task that history has set for us. But a cruel destiny seems to pursue us and nullify all our efforts.

7. The Security Council has passed a resolution on the Kashmir question.[4] We have accepted this resolution. But, in doing so, we have made clear our position in regard to certain basic issues involved, and more particularly in regard to the disbandment of the 'Azad Kashmir' forces and the future of the northern areas.[5] No mediator has yet been appointed. We made it clear that the mediator must be appointed with the consent of the parties.[6]

4. The resolution introduced on 24 February 1950 was passed by the Security Council on 14 March 1950. See also *ante*, p. 44.

5. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1., pp. 515-516.

6. On 9 April 1950, the Government of India accepted the nomination of Sir Owen Dixon as mediator.

8. I should like to draw your special attention to the Government resolution[7] about the Planning Commission which has been appointed under my chairmanship. This resolution indicates the wide scope of the Planning Commission's work. We are taking this Commission very seriously and we hope that it will help us in taking a balanced view of India's development and in devising means for rapid progress. The success of this Planning Commission depends very greatly on the co-operation it will receive from the State Governments. And so I hope that we may rely upon you for the fullest co-operation at all levels.

9. As I write this, the conference of Governors and *Rajapramukhs* is taking place here.[8] This conference is of an informal type because decisions cannot be taken without full reference to the Chief Ministers. But it serves a useful purpose in giving us an overall view of what is happening in various parts of India. It becomes increasingly necessary for this full picture of India to be kept in view, not only for economic and planning purposes, but also in regard to many other matters.

10. This letter is a brief one. Perhaps I might write to you a longer letter later.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

7. The resolution of 15 March 1950 stated that the Planning Commission would consider *de novo* the economic conditions of the country, draw up a new plan for development, fix priorities and stages of the plan, identify factors retarding economic development and suggest remedial measures, determine the infrastructure for the plan, appraise periodically the progress achieved and recommend necessary adjustments.

8. On 18 and 19 March 1950.

10

New Delhi
1 April, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

It has been my custom to write to you about various developments in foreign and domestic affairs. I confess I find myself unable to say much about world affairs or even about many of our domestic affairs at the present moment. My mind is full of the major problem that confronts us today. It may be called the Bengal problem or the Indo-Pakistan problem. There is no doubt that this is the severest trial that we have had during the last two and a half years, ever since the Punjab tragedy.

2. I shall refer to two or three matters first before I deal with this major question. The Planning Commission has started its work and the first regular meeting took place on the 28th March. We are building great hopes on this Commission. We do not think of it as something to report after a while and then cease to be. It is a continuing Commission which will work from day to day and help us in building the new India. I earnestly trust that your Government will give it every co-operation. You will no doubt hear from it directly as to what they expect you to do in the matter.

3. An Election Commissioner has been appointed for India. He is Shri Sukumar Sen,[1] who till recently was the Chief

1. (1895-1963). Joined I.C.S., 1922; Chief Secretary, West Bengal Government, 1947-50; Chief Election Commissioner, 1950-58; Chairman, Dandakaranya Development Authority, 1961-63.

Secretary of the West Bengal Government. You were addressed some time ago about the next general elections and a variety of replies came to us about a suitable date. I am quite clear in my mind that we must have this election almost at all costs early next year. The latest date I can suggest is April 1951. Parliament, I hope, will pass legislation during the current session in regard to these general elections. I hope that your Government will speed up all the preliminaries of this election.

4. We have had talks with representatives of Sikkim and I am glad to say that a satisfactory decision has been arrived at.[2] Sikkim will continue to be a protected state of India, that is to say, it will have autonomy, but its defence, foreign affairs, etc., will be directly under the charge of the Government of India. In certain other matters too, the Government of India can interfere.[3] The subsidy which we give to Sikkim is going to be increased.

5. I now come to the major problem to which I have referred above. You know that the Prime Minister of Pakistan is coming here on April 2nd for conversations on this subject.[4] It is too optimistic to think that these conversations will result in a magical change of the situation. At the same time, there is no need to think that they must fail completely. The pressure of events is such that there is little room left for normal diplomatic talk. Cruel and stark facts stare us in the face and we have to come to grips with them. Every person of sense and goodwill will hope that something good will emerge out of these conversations. Even though they may not result in a sudden change, it will be something if they encourage the forces which work for peace in this country and Pakistan.

2. Provisional agreement was reached in New Delhi on 20 March 1950.

3. The press note issued by the Government of India on 20 March 1950 said that "as regards internal Government, the State will continue to enjoy autonomy subject to the ultimate responsibility of the Government of India for the maintenance of good administration and law and order."

4. Discussions between the two Prime Ministers in New Delhi from 2 to 7 April 1950 mainly concerned the treatment of minorities in the two countries.

6. If one reads the newspapers, or some of them, one would imagine that there are few people in the country who really seek peace. There has been an amazing amount of wild writing and hysterical speech. I have been surprised beyond measure at this wave of hysteria and lack of balance that has come over large numbers of our people. We used to blame Pakistan for its morbid mental state. We have little to choose now, so far as this state of mind is concerned, between India and Pakistan. Most of us are afflicted by it and very few can look at things in perspective or with some kind of a balance. People talk vaguely but excitedly of firm action, meaning thereby, presumably, war. Well, if war unhappily comes, we shall face it and we should be prepared for it. But hardly anyone realizes what war is and what it may mean to our country and to the world.

7. Wars come in this unhappy and distracted world and when they come, we have to accept the challenge. But it is not realized that modern war does not solve any problem. It only creates new problems which are much more difficult than the old ones. I have no doubt in my mind that war would be a tremendous catastrophe for all concerned and that we should try to avoid it to the best of our ability. Having said this, I have also to say that, in the circumstances of today, we have to be perfectly ready for it. We have, therefore, made certain fresh dispositions of our armed forces to meet any contingency that might arise. This is with no intention of provoking war or indulging in aggressive action. But the situation is too delicate for us to take risks or ignore possible developments which might imperil our national existence.

8. Newspapers in Pakistan write hysterically and give a completely one-sided and distorted picture. I regret to say that many newspapers in India are equally hysterical and also give a completely one-sided picture. And so it becomes difficult for the readers of these newspapers even to know the facts and consequently they cannot judge properly. All of us have a natural tendency to slur over our own errors and to look only to the errors of our opponents. Many evil deeds have been done in

East Pakistan, as you well know, and vast numbers of people are moving from there to West Bengal and Assam. But we have to remember also that terrible deeds have been performed in West Bengal and Assam and vast numbers of Muslims are moving from West Bengal and Assam to East Pakistan. There is a considerable flow of Muslims from north and north-western U.P. also to Pakistan.

9. What does this show? Quite apart from the murder and arson and abductions, and forcible conversions and lootings, that have taken place in East Pakistan, and the murder and arson and looting that have taken place in West Bengal and some other parts of India, the major fact stands out that the Hindus of East Pakistan feel that it is not possible for them to stay there. They have no sense of security, much less of living their normal lives with opportunity to go ahead. The other major fact is that Muslims in West Bengal and, to some extent, in the northern and north-western parts of U.P. have also lost all sense of security. Pakistan, because of its basic policy, must be held to blame for much that has happened. But are we free from blame and can we excuse everything on the plea of inevitable reactions and repercussions? I cannot accept that argument. We have failed to preserve law and order and we have failed to give protection and a sense of security to large numbers of our Muslim nationals. Our failure may be explained, but, none the less, it is a failure which brings no credit to us.

10. We are passing through a major revolution in the minds of the people in India. That revolution started at the time of the partition or earlier and it has continued in various degrees. Now it has reached a new climax. The first thing for us to be clear about is our objective. Are we holding to our old objectives or do we wish to change them? Whatever we do, it should be done deliberately and after thought and not spasmodically and under stress of emotion. For my part, I hold to our old ideals and our old objectives. I hold to them because I think they are right as well as because I believe that any other

line of action will bring ruin to our people. I am convinced that in the last analysis, it is the Gandhian approach to the communal problem that can solve it. That approach may be varied according to circumstances, but its basic principles have to be adhered to.

11. But there is little or none of this approach visible today. A great deal of excited criticism has been thrown at me, chiefly from the press in India or part of it. That criticism has led me to an even stronger belief that we must hold fast to our anchor. If that anchor drifts away, then I have no particular objective to work or live for. Therefore, I propose to hold to that anchor, whatever my critics may feel or say. I can function in no other way.

12. If we look back during the past few years, it is extraordinary to realize how we have drifted away from our old moorings. Is this drift to continue? It is true that we cannot control Pakistan's policy, and yet we are affected by it powerfully. We cannot, for the moment, control many of our own people. But if we are swept away by what Pakistan does or by what some of our own people feel in the heat of the moment, then we prove ourselves little men whom the course of events will, no doubt, sweep away.

13. It is this basic problem that troubles my mind. Where do we look, what journey do we wish to undertake? Quite apart from peace and war, this matter must be cleared up. War is never an objective. It is only the means of obtaining an objective.

14. Apart from these major problems, we have to deal with the refugee problem in its new phase. We have taken the fullest responsibility for all refugees who may come from East Bengal. That is a tremendous task and yet a task which we could not possibly set aside. In dealing with this problem, the greatest co-operation of all the States in India is needed and I earnestly trust that your Government will give that co-operation.

15. Many people say that we should not have any talks with the representatives of Pakistan because our previous talks have failed and we cannot rely upon their assurances. If two independent States do not confer with each other, then the only other courses open are either war or international intervention. International intervention is not something that we can welcome or invite; war is something which has always to be avoided, if this is at all possible. It is to be avoided not just for idealistic reasons, but because of hard practical facts. It is not clear to me how war will solve even the present problem. It is much more clear that it will give rise to further and even more difficult problems. But apart from this, a war may well lead to two major consequences—its development into world war and, secondly, social upsets on a huge scale in India and Pakistan. If this happens, the outcome of the war will see something entirely different from what we have envisaged, apart from the tremendous misery and destruction involved. War, therefore, should be the very last resort. It cannot be ruled out and therefore we must keep ready for it. But it must always be remembered that it is a counsel of despair and no hope or results can be expected from it.

16. What then remains? An attempt, however difficult, to approach the problem through negotiations. Behind the negotiations there will, no doubt, be all kinds of pressures, including ultimately the possibility of war. Negotiations cannot be just merely assurances. There must be some method of devising a machinery of implementation of those assurances.

17. Meanwhile, the exodus of vast numbers of people continues both from Pakistan and India. It is likely to continue for sometime, whatever we might do. All that we can do is to create conditions which tend to lessen that exodus and ultimately stop it. Talk of wholesale exchanges of populations seems to me totally unrealistic. Yet, large-scale exchanges are taking place and it would be very unwise to try to stop this inflow or outflow Therefore, while these migrations continue

and are not stopped in any way, we try to create conditions which would ultimately prevent them.

18. There are at present a number of organizations and some newspapers which are carrying on a deliberate policy of creating trouble so as to force the hands of Government into declaring war. We all know that there is a great deal of public feeling in this matter, but I do not believe that the great majority of our people want war. In any event, nothing could be more cowardly on our part than to submit to the clamour of some people and fashion our policy accordingly. We must work according to our own lights and try to convince the people of the rightness of our action. If they are not so convinced, they will have to choose others to control their destinies for the time being. The matter is too serious for prevarication. We cannot tolerate the activities of some of these organizations, notably the Hindu Mahasabha and the like organizations, which are deliberately bent on mischief. They have thrown out a challenge to us and we have no alternative but to accept it with all that this implies. For my part, my mind is clear in this matter and, so long as I am Prime Minister, I shall not allow communalism to shape our policy, nor am I prepared to tolerate barbarous and uncivilized behaviour.

19. I suggest to you, therefore, that your Government should make its policy quite clear on these matters and your officers should have no doubt about it. I say so because I find that many of our officials are themselves not clear in their minds and are sometimes biased. Even our police force is not always impartial. In a crisis of this kind, half-hearted measures and half-hearted officials are of no use and they should be told so.

20. There is too often a tendency to wait for some incident to happen before action is taken. That is unwise and we have often to pay heavily for it. Therefore, if the policy is clear, it should be given effect to before incidents occur and before mischief-makers get busy. I have no doubt that we can control this situation, if we set about it. It is time we set about it in the

fullest measure and without any prevarication. I think it would be a good thing if this was explained to officials of all grades. If any of them are not prepared to follow this policy honestly and effectively, then it is open to them to leave the service.

21. I write to you about the Bengal problem and its repercussions elsewhere. In considering it, however, we cannot forget the wider world context today. We appear to live in a disintegrating world and there is no near prospect of the forces of peace overcoming the tendencies of war. We have stood out as champions of peace in the world, and now, today, we feel humiliated. How can we champion peace and freedom elsewhere, if we cannot maintain them in our own country? How can we condemn communalism elsewhere, if we tolerate it in India?

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

11

New Delhi
8 April, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

You have been sent separately copy of the Agreement[1] that was signed today by me and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. This Agreement deals principally with East Bengal, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. But generally it concerns itself with the entire minority problem in Pakistan and India.

We met to consider these vital problems at a most critical moment in our country's history. We were, it might be said, hovering on the verge of a precipice. The significance of recent events and the terrible possibilities of the future gave great importance to this meeting. Very great interest has been taken in it in the principal countries of the world. This was so, not because people abroad are interested very much in the fate of millions in India or Pakistan, but because they realized that this was a matter which had the widest international significance.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. By the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Khan Agreement signed in New Delhi on 8 April 1950, the Governments of India and Pakistan emphasized that the allegiance and loyalty of the minorities was to the State of which they were citizens, and that it was to the Government of their own State that they should look for the redress of their grievances. Both Governments agreed to ensure complete equality of citizenship to minorities and extend all facilities to migrants from East Bengal, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. The Agreement also provided that each Government would set up a commission of inquiry to enquire into and report on the causes and extent of the communal disturbances. In order to help to restore confidence, the two Governments also decided to depute two Ministers, one from each Government, to remain in the affected areas for such period as might be necessary, and to constitute separate minority commissions in East Bengal, West Bengal and Assam.

After seven days of continuous and exhausting discussions we have arrived at an Agreement. It is possible to criticize some items in this Agreement or to suggest that there might have been an improvement here and there. But, it is clear, what counts is not any detail in the Agreement but rather the spirit underlying it and the future possibilities. We have crossed a very big hurdle, many hurdles remain. Although we discussed at length recent occurrences in East and West Bengal and Assam, we had all the time before us the basic problem of Indo-Pakistan relations. These have poisoned the air for us for these two years and a half and they had arrived at a stage when a measure of disaster had already overwhelmed us and a far greater disaster seemed imminent. It was the parting of the ways. We went either to this greater disaster or we took a turn in the opposite direction. The Agreement indicates a turn in that opposite direction. I wish to be neither optimistic nor pessimistic about this Agreement and the future will show what its consequences are. But I am quite sure that the mere fact of Agreement and this determined and sincere effort to turn the tide of events in a more hopeful direction is a good thing. It will bring immediate relief to millions of people who have lived or passed through disastrous happenings and for whom the future was terribly dark. That relief itself is something to be grateful for. We get time to consolidate this position and perhaps go some way in the right direction towards solving this most difficult problem.

Whatever the views of any person may be about the merits of particular clauses of the Agreement, the position we have to face, after the Agreement is signed, is clear. Personally, I think the Agreement is definitely a good one from every point of view and that it lays down the foundations of a future settlement. But, in any event, it is something which gives us a handle to work for better ends and it would be unfortunate in the extreme if we do not take full advantage of this. Having come to an Agreement, it should be accepted by all of us in the best of spirit and with a view to making it a living thing. There is no other way and no other alternative, except deliberately to aim

at a big-scale conflict with whatever it may bring. There is no half-way house. I take it that almost everyone is agreed that we should avoid that conflict in so far as we can. If so, then we must of necessity give full support to this Agreement and implement it in letter and spirit.

There are many aspects of this communal problem. But perhaps the most important aspect is the psychological one, the prevalence of fear and hatred and passion. From no point of view can these emotions be justified, for they are weakening and disabling. This Agreement helps us to fight the psychology of fear. Let us take full advantage of it and let us do so with goodwill and not in a half-hearted way.

It is often said that we cannot trust the faith of the Government or the people of Pakistan. That may have some justification, though I think it is always wrong to treat a people in this way. Personally, I am convinced that Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan[2] is sincerely desirous of implementing this Agreement and trying to solve all the other problems between India and Pakistan. It is also well-known that the Prime Minister of Pakistan occupies a commanding position in that country and his word counts. We should accept that word of his and help him and help ourselves to implement it.

But quite apart from what Pakistan may or may not do, it appears to me incumbent on us to go ahead with this matter with all our strength and energy and goodwill. We are playing for very large stakes in which the future of our country and the well-being of millions of common folk are involved. We would be guilty of a gross betrayal if we temporized at this moment and allowed evil forces to have their way and merely looked on.

I earnestly trust therefore that your Government will do its utmost to implement this Agreement in every way and to make it perfectly clear that we stand by it to the full. We must try to

2. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 29.

capture the minds of the people and to influence them in this direction. We cannot do so by an attitude of cavilling and throwing the blame on others. Others may be to blame, and if so, they will necessarily suffer the consequences of wrong-doing. But even that wrong-doing can be limited and controlled by us by our actions, if they are right. It has been a matter of great sorrow to us to learn of the sufferings of the minorities in East Bengal and elsewhere. But what has happened in some parts of our territory in India has been not only a matter of sorrow but a failure of responsibility. We must stop this.

The whole approach to this question must be a friendly one and not of blaming people. Only thus can we create an atmosphere that will help. We have to isolate the actual evil-doers who are not many. They flourish because they get a friendly atmosphere to work in.

I commend this Agreement to you and earnestly trust that you will seize hold of this opportunity which history offers us to stop the rot that was setting in and to turn the tide of events in a better direction.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12

New Delhi
15 April, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Since I wrote to you my last fortnightly letter, I have already addressed to you another letter.[1] This was sent immediately after the conclusion of the Agreement between Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and me. This Agreement has been fully discussed in the press and you have no doubt studied it carefully.

2. It may be said that this Agreement has been generally welcomed in India, though without great enthusiasm, and with the exception of most people in West Bengal It is easy to understand the reaction in the surcharged atmosphere of Bengal where people have suffered so much. The burden of much that has happened not only in the course of the last few months, but also since the partition, has fallen on West Bengal. I earnestly hope, however, that even people in West Bengal will gradually appreciate the good in the Agreement and will try to implement it to the full.

3. Two of my colleagues in the Central Cabinet, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee [2] and Shri K.C. Neogy,[3] offered their

1. See *ante*, item 11.
2. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p.36.
3. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 91.

resignations on this occasion.[4] *Whatever their differences of* opinion might have been at an earlier stage, it seemed to me that after the conclusion of the Agreement, there could be only one course open to us and that was full implementation of it. I requested them, therefore, to reconsider and withdraw their resignations. I regret to say that they have expressed their inability to do so.[5]

4. It is clear that we have to implement this Agreement to the fullest in letter and spirit. Such indications as we have received from Pakistan go to show that the Pakistan Government is taking steps to implement the Agreement. The tone of the Pakistan press has changed very markedly for the better. A few unfortunate incidents have occurred, even after the signing of the Agreement, on the border between East and West Bengal. This is regrettable. But it is possible that new instructions had not reached those places till then. We are informed that clear and explicit instructions have been sent now and I hope that these border incidents as well as the harassment of migrants will cease. The West Bengal Government has also issued the necessary instructions.

5. For a considerable time past, almost since the partition, petty border incidents between East and West Bengal have taken place. The Radcliffe[6] boundary[7] was not a clear one and

4. Explaining the reasons for his resignation, S.P. Mookerjee, in a statement in Parliament on 19 April, said that his "differences are fundamental and it is not fair or honourable for me to continue as a member of the Cabinet whose policy I cannot approve." He described India's attitude towards Pakistan as "weak, halting and inconsistent." He could not believe that Pakistan which had in the past observed such agreements more in their breach would now abide by the new Agreement. This fact, according to Mookerjee, was borne out by the continuing repression of the minorities in Pakistan.

5. The President accepted the resignations on 15 April 1950.

6. Cyril John Radcliffe (1894-1977). A leading British lawyer; Director-General, Ministry of Information, 1941-45; Chairman, Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions, 1947.

7. The award demarcating the boundaries between India and Pakistan in the Punjab and Bengal was announced on 17 August 1947.

numerous petty disputes arose in regard to it. Some land thus became disputed territory and this was often the scene of these incidents. The Bagge[8] Tribunal[9] considered some of the more important of these disputes and gave its award,[10] which was accepted by both parties. Unfortunately even that award was not quite complete and actual demarcation has to take place in some areas and so some kind of a doubt persists in regard to these small areas.

6. These border incidents attracted some attention previously. Ever since the new flare up in East and West Bengal, naturally every border incident has had much more importance attached to it. There is greater tension at the borders and large numbers of migrants are crossing them. Hence there has been greater possibility of incidents also.

7. One such incident, which was peculiarly sad, was the shooting down of a Calcutta medical student who was engaged in giving first-aid near the border to refugees.[11] Firing took place from the Pakistan side and this fourth-year student was killed. This took place about two or three weeks ago. The actual area where he was working was apparently disputed territory. It was a little over two miles in width and the railway crossed it.

8. Algot Fredrik Johan Bagge (1875-1971). Swedish lawyer; Judge, Supreme Court of Sweden, 1930-43.

9. The tribunal was set up under the Indo-Pakistan Agreement of 14 December 1948 to resolve boundary disputes between East and West Bengal and between East Bengal and Assam. Besides Algot Bagge, the other members of the tribunal were Chandrasekhar Aiyar, retired judge of the Madras High Court, and Justice Shahabuddin of the Dacca High Court.

10. While the award announced on 4 February 1950 upheld India's claim over the disputed areas between Murshidabad and Rajshahi districts and about the course of Kusiyara river in East Bengal, its decision on Mathabhanga issue favoured Pakistan. The award allowed the status quo to be maintained in the Patharia Hill forest areas.

11. Pakistan armed police opened fire on 31 March 1950 on a group of medical students and volunteers engaged in relief work at Jayanagar on the East Bengal border.

8. *A major incident took place*[12] *in Kamalpur in Tripura,* which is a township situated almost on the borders of East Bengal. A large number of Muslims left this township for East Bengal and then apparently came back and set fire to houses in the township. It is said that they were supported by some irregular forces from Pakistan.[13] Considerable damage was done. This took place a little more than two weeks ago.

9. Some of the incidents on the border have been due to Muslim refugees coming back to recover some of their belongings. In doing so, they have sometimes tried to set fire to their old huts. There has naturally been conflict between them and the police on this side.

10. I think that these incidents are likely to cease before long, though one cannot guarantee that nothing will happen. The first effect of the Agreement should be a stoppage of this kind of conflict and violence, either private or official. Both sides are undoubtedly trying to put a stop to this and clear instructions have been issued accordingly. In regard to the little patches of disputed territory, we have suggested that these should be considered, for the present, as no-man's land, and the status quo should be maintained.

11. Whatever view one might take of the Agreement, one thing seems perfectly clear to me. Sardar Patel, in a very moving speech addressed to the Congress Party last evening, laid great stress on this aspect.[14] This is the fact that having arrived at this Agreement, both our honour and self-interest demand that we should implement it to the full. Not to do so would not only discredit us but harm us greatly. To try to do so half-heartedly would be even worse, because we would get the

12. On 24 March 1950.

13. Ansars, a Muslim volunteers' organization from East Pakistan.

14. Patel exhorted the party members to strengthen the hands of Nehru and work for unity in the party and in the country so that a fair trial was given to the Agreement.

discredit and no benefit at all. Therefore, even for those people who are not enthusiastic about the Agreement, the only right course is to work for its implementation. It is a relatively small matter whether some item of the Agreement might have been somewhat different or not. The main thing is the spirit underlying it and the effort to translate that spirit into action. If the spirit is absent, either on our side or that of Pakistan, then the Agreement fails. If there is that earnestness of spirit, then it does not matter much if some clause is not as good as it might have been. In the final analysis, this is a test of our faith in ourselves. Some people talk of the bonafides or the lack of it of Pakistan. That certainly is important. But essentially it is a question of our own faith and confidence in ourselves. If we have faith and are true to it, then we can wrest success even out of apparent failure. In other words, there can be no failure except our own failure from this point of view.

12. This may sound strange to some people, for memories are short, and we have forgotten already many of the lessons that Gandhiji taught us. In those days, which seem so far off now, we measured our action by our own faith and strength and not by what the opponent did. That opponent was out to check and counter us at every step. The lesson we learnt was that right action always strengthens, even though it might not produce the full result we desire. That right action, in order to produce results, must be based on faith in it and confidence in ourselves.

13. It is easy to criticize. But one has always to think of an alternative course of action, and often enough in public affairs, one has to choose the lesser evil. After this Agreement has been concluded, there is no alternative course of action left for anyone in India, except something that inevitably leads to disruption and chaos.

14. This rather negative line of argument leads to the conclusion that the Agreement must be implemented to the full. But I feel strongly that our case for the Agreement is not

merely a negative one but a positive one. I cannot say what our future will be, for our path is full of difficulties and pitfalls. The passions of masses of people have been roused and we have seen behaviour which shames and degrades. We seem to be in the grip of elemental forces and long-suppressed emotions which suddenly erupt in volcanic outbursts. The difficulties are obvious. Nevertheless, even if this Agreement does not solve any problem to our satisfaction, it must necessarily help somewhat in its solution, provided we act correctly and as men and women of faith and determination.

15. There is no alternative to this course of action now. Was there an alternative before the Agreement was signed? I do not think so. The real alternative was only war. Some people talked about an exchange of populations. Any such exchange would have upset the whole fabric of our State in theory and in practice. It could not have been confined to any particular area. It would have spread gradually or suddenly to the whole of East and West Bengal and then to the rest of India.

16. At the same time, if some kind of automatic exchange becomes inevitable to some extent, the door is left open. We cannot force events by acting unrealistically and not recognizing the urge that is at present compelling masses of people to move. This urge will not suddenly stop, though it may ultimately lessen, because of the Agreement. Tens of thousands are already on the move and have uprooted themselves from their homes. They will not go back, at any rate, for the present. They will continue their unfortunate journey. Because of this, we have made this process as safe and as easy as possible in the circumstances. People can travel without danger and with their moveable property and jewellery and some cash. The rest of their property which they leave behind is protected or an attempt is made to protect it. The door is left open for them to go back and regain their old property or to sell it or exchange it. Thus immediate fear and the loss of all they possessed is largely removed. That obviously is a considerable gain.

17. The migrations may continue in spite of this, though I think they will lessen and ultimately dry up, if we play our part properly. Even if they do not dry up, it cannot be said that the Agreement has failed, because it has eased the situation as between India and Pakistan and, more especially, eased it for these millions of people. We get a chance to breathe and work for a change for the better. Surely that is not a small gain, and it applies not only to the two Bengals and Assam, but also to States like the U.P. which had been gravely shaken by recent occurrences.

18. Before the Agreement was signed, the only real alternative was war. However much we may be opposed to war, unfortunately we cannot, in the present state of the world, rule it out. If we could rule it out, we would keep no army or navy or air force. Therefore, we keep prepared for any such contingency, however distasteful it might be. But let us be clear about the consequences of such a war. Most people, who have talked about it, have probably not realized at all what these consequences are. These consequences are terrible to contemplate. But apart from them, how far would war have solved the immediate problem before us? It is often said that war solves no problems in the modern world, even if it did so in ancient times. It is by no means easy to understand how we would have solved the problem that faces us in India by warlike measures. If we were compelled to resist by war, we would have had little choice and we would have had to accept this dreadful course of action, in spite of our bitter dislike of it. But it would have been a counsel of despair, leading to all kinds of unforeseen and disastrous consequences. So, if any alternative offered itself, we had to seize it. That alternative may not promise us the kind of success that we want, that is a solution of our present-day problems. But even if it takes us some way, it is worthwhile, and there is always the possibility of further advance towards a solution.

19. For my part, my mind is perfectly clear that we took the right step, both negatively and positively, and that any other

step would have been harmful in the extreme. I have repeatedly spoken about this Agreement and the circumstances that surround it. Whatever I have said has not been, just as politicians say, to try to cover up our errors and find some excuses for our action. It has been the expression of my deeply felt thoughts. All of us had given earnest thought to this difficult situation that we had to face during these few months. Those of us who had the responsibility for decision on these vital issues at a moment of crisis in our history, bore a heavier burden and had to give their full mind and heart to this matter. I firmly believe that we did the right thing and I am equally firm in my belief that we must pursue this to the utmost limit. If it so happens that we fail in our endeavours, that will be our misfortune. But I see no reason why we should fail in spite of all that the pessimists and prophets of evil might say. In any event, the die is cast and we cannot go back. To stand still is folly. We have, therefore, to go ahead and do so with all our strength. We have to save ourselves not only from what Pakistan might do or not do, but also from ourselves. For, as things were, both Pakistan and we were heading straight towards a complete degradation of human behaviour. Out of that degradation, nothing good could come.

20. A criticism is made that we have deserted the minority in East Bengal by saying in the Agreement (Clause A) that the allegiance and loyalty of the minorities is to the State of which they are citizens. This was a truism and we have said it often enough before. But this does not and cannot get rid of the facts of the situation and of the intimate relationship that exists between many people in India and many people in Pakistan. In South Africa, we stood up as champions for people of Indian descent who are nationals of South Africa and who had been deprived of certain rights which we consider as inalienable human rights. How much more must we feel about those who are far more intimately connected with us, but who, by a turn of fate, became nationals of another country. We can neither ignore them nor forget them nor leave them to suffer by themselves.

21. We have been accused of appeasement of Pakistan. The word has a bad odour and a bad history. I do not myself see where appeasement comes in, either on the side of the Government or the people. If anything that is not war is appeasement, then perhaps we have appeased. It would be equally true to say that Pakistan has tried to appease us. If an attempt to prevent a reversion to barbarism is appeasement, then perhaps the charge is true. But we learnt long ago in the school of Gandhi that there can be firmness with decency, and even conflict with the hand of friendship never withdrawn. That is not weakness, for if it is so, then Gandhi might be termed weak. And yet we all know that he was the bravest man that we have known and that he would never give in where high principle was concerned. How far we have moved from those days, when a handful of us could challenge an empire, and challenge it with a smile on our faces and with little of ill will in our hearts! The strength lay in us then, not outside, and so nobody could ultimately defeat us.

22. So, at this moment of crisis, we cannot and must not falter. We must show the discipline of a united nation and the confidence of a people, sure of their cause. If we do so, no harm can come to us and we shall be able to serve not only the nation as a whole but those unfortunate and suffering friends of ours who live beyond the frontiers of present-day India.

23. If this is the choice we have made, and there is no other, then the work has to be undertaken with right goodwill. For Congressmen, more especially, it is a challenge and a test after their own hearts. If they have anything of the old spirit left, if they still believe in the ideals that moved them and which created human earthquakes in this country, then all is well. Even a small number of brave men and women can change the fate of a nation. But we are many. So why should any of us be down-hearted and pessimistic? We must go out to the people and repeat to them the old truths, which never grow old, and carry the torch which lightened not only their burden but other burdens also. Let us tell the people the truth and pull them

back from wrong thoughts and wrong action. But before we do so to others, we have to do this to ourselves. Only then can we influence others.

24. We talk of the implementation of the Agreement and we can do so literally by carrying out the provisions laid down in its various clauses. But that is not enough, for we are struggling to capture something that is in the minds and hearts of our people as well as the people of Pakistan. And so our actions must not be confined to the mere clauses of the Agreement, but to interpret the spirit that underlies it. When we deal with human beings, whether individually or *en masse*, the way of approach should not be that of the pettifogging lawyer or attorney. We have to be careful, of course, as responsible persons, not to sacrifice any national interest. But, at the same time, our approach has to be generous in order to draw out generosity and goodwill from others. Therefore, our words and writing and actions should be attuned to this end. A grave responsibility rests with the press. It would be unfair of me to criticize the press generally, for most newspapers have been very helpful. But there are some exceptions and it has amazed me to read with what bitterness of spirit and narrowness of vision they deal with matters of the gravest import.

25. Yesterday our Parliament passed the new evacuee property law.[15] These laws of Pakistan and India are a mirror of our relationship, which has grown more and more strange and abnormal. In the circumstances, step by step, they became inevitable. Nevertheless, they are very extraordinary. These laws are not to blame, but rather that odd relationship that has developed during the last two years and a half. We are trying to come to grips with that relationship and to straighten out its crooked curves. Sometime or other, this will have to be done. That is inevitable, whatever shape it may take. If so, the sooner we do it, the better, and we might as well take advantage of the

15. The Administration of Evacuee Property Act defined evacuees and evacuee property and laid down principles for the disposal of such property.

present moment to try to straighten it out as much as we can. The problem of evacuee property has been a difficult and intricate problem and millions of displaced persons have suffered because of this. We have tried repeatedly to come to some arrangement with Pakistan in regard to it, but have had little response. Meanwhile, these evacuee property laws come on our statute books and affect and upset the lives of large numbers of people. This is a big question to be dealt with later and separately. But it is important that in the application and working out of these laws and regulations, we should remember the spirit of the Agreement that has been arrived at. The whole object of that Agreement is to create conditions of security and peaceful and progressive living for all minorities. Anything that disturbs that security goes against the spirit of that Agreement. Therefore, it is necessary that the administration of these laws should be very carefully scrutinized and every appearance of injustice or hardship should be avoided. It may be that a few guilty persons escape. It is far more important that the innocent do not suffer. Therefore, Custodians of Evacuee Property all over the country should be directed to bear this Agreement in mind all the time and function with moderation. Let us see during the next two or three months how events develop and let us do nothing to prevent their developing in the right direction. This applies to the permit system also between India and Pakistan.

26. In the course of the next few days a delegation is going from Delhi to Karachi to discuss trade matters between the two countries.[16] For some months now, trade between India and Pakistan has been at a standstill. Some talks on these matters took place between the officials of the two countries when the Prime Minister of Pakistan was here. It was decided then to continue the talks as soon as possible and we agreed to send our officials to Karachi for this purpose.

16. From 19 to 21 April 1950.

27. You will have seen that we have accepted the appointment of Sir Owen Dixon[17] as mediator in Kashmir. So has Pakistan, and I suppose that he will come to India sometime early in May. Sir Owen Dixon is an eminent judge of the High Court of Australia and has a high reputation for learning and integrity.

28. The budget session of our Parliament will end within a few days. Before it does so, we have to pass a Representation of the People Bill.[18] This is necessary so that arrangements for the general elections might proceed as rapidly as possible. I have often written to you about the necessity for holding these elections early next year. We cannot possibly afford to delay them. A certain conflict arises between these elections and the census which also will take place early next year. It is proposed to hold the elections soon after the census. This might mean that the elections will be held sometime in April 1951.

29. The President and I are going to Dhanbad next week to open one of our major scientific laboratories, the Fuel Research Institute.[19] Among the many disappointments that we have had, there is at least one achievement for which we can take credit and that is the advance of scientific research in this country. Our new laboratories are magnificent institutions of which any country can be proud. In this connection, I should like to draw your attention to a certain tendency which is doing harm to science. This is a tendency towards separation of research from teaching. This is accentuated in India by the separation of most research institutes from the universities. Even from the point of view of governmental organization, they

17. (1886-1972). Judge, High Court of Australia, 1929-52 and Chief Justice, 1952-64; United Nations mediator in Kashmir dispute, 1950.

18. The Bill passed on 20 April 1950 prescribed the strength of the Lok Sabha, the State Legislatures and the upper houses and laid down norms for the preparation of electoral rolls, delimitation of constituencies and the qualifications of the voters.

19. The Central Fuel Research Institute was inaugurated by Nehru on 22 April 1950.

are separate. It seems to me essential that there should be the closest co-ordination between research institutes and universities. Also that we should encourage research work in universities. After all, our major research institutes must be fed from the universities and if the universities dry up, then the research institutes cannot survive for long.

30. One of the unfortunate consequences of the upheavals following partition has been the large number of students who were affected by it. A question has arisen as to whether these students can appear at university examinations as private candidates and without attending the normal number of lectures. I am all against lowering the standards of our universities and I dislike the private student system. The advantage of going to a university cannot be obtained by merely reading books and passing examinations. Nevertheless, I would like you to consider how far we can accommodate these refugee students as private candidates. I would not like the standards to be lowered for them. It may be necessary that the interval between the two examinations might be slightly increased for them. Thus the normal two years' course in a university might be increased to three for those who are attending evening classes, etc. I hope your Education Department and the universities in your State will pay heed to the needs of these students.

31. I hope to send you separately a summary of the programme of the Chinese Communist Government. This will be in their own language. China is of great importance in Asia and in the world today and it is necessary that we should know what they stand for, or, at any rate, what they say they stand for.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

13

New Delhi
2 May, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The dominating feature of the past fortnight, as of the fortnight before it, was what might be called the Bengal situation. Everywhere people watched, with varying degrees of hope and apprehension, the results that flowed from the Agreement of 8th April. It is difficult to measure these consequences, though there are some tests which can be applied. One obvious test is that of the exodus. There was, to begin with, a fairly marked falling off in the exodus both ways in Bengal and Assam. Then figures rose again and now there is a tendency for these figures to go down, though not very greatly.

2. Two contrary forces are at play. One is the increased confidence of people to stay or to return. The other is fear, if not so much of the present, then of the future, and therefore to take advantage of present conditions to migrate. Thus while the Agreement and what has followed certainly bring some measure of confidence, at the same time it facilitates people's migrations, because conditions to do so are much easier and a good deal of moveable property, including jewellery, etc., can be brought over. There is thus a feeling of moving across the border while the going is good. One fact, however, which is not sufficiently publicized, is that a fairly considerable number of Hindus are returning from West Bengal to East Bengal. Thus the latest figures of Hindu migrations from East Bengal to West Bengal are about 12,000 a day. Hindus going back to East Bengal from West Bengal have numbered between 3,000 to

4,000 a day. That is a fairly substantial number, though not much. So far as Muslims are concerned, their exodus is much less from West Bengal than it used to be. Indeed, the exodus of Muslims from the U.P. and Rajputana to West Pakistan has been almost as big and has caused us a good deal of worry.

3. There is no doubt that the Agreement and what has followed it have changed the whole atmosphere of India and Pakistan. It has brought immediate relief to millions and a certain glimmering hope for the future. It is also true that Governments on both sides are trying their utmost to implement the Agreement. All the information that has come to me, as well as my personal observation, go to show that the Pakistan Government is determined to implement the Agreement. I was myself witness to a certain measure of popular enthusiasm in Karachi when I visited that city recently.[1]

4. All this is to the good and is a basic gain which no one can take away. The change in atmosphere was indeed so sudden that it appeared almost miraculous in some places. Newspapers, which had been breathing hatred and violence, became full of the milk of human kindness. Whatever the future may show, even the gains achieved in the present are remarkable and cannot be washed away. Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that fear and uncertainty of the future fill the minds of the Hindus in East Bengal and, to some extent, of the Muslims in West Bengal and parts of the U.P., etc. There have been no incidents at all in the U.P. excepting some trouble that took place at the time of the *Holi*.[2] And yet the U.P. migrations had continued. This shows this basic fear and a sense of insecurity. We have a hard fight ahead of us against this sense of fear.

5. People who have given any thought to this matter realize the importance of the Agreement and the fact that there was

1. On 26 and 27 April 1950.
2. See *ante*, p. 51.

no alternative to it except something which led to catastrophe and disaster.

6. I paid a very brief visit to Karachi on the 26th and 27th April. I discussed with the Prime Minister of Pakistan many questions relating to this Agreement, as well as other matters of importance, which included Kashmir and the evacuee property question. Not much progress was made regarding Kashmir. But in regard to evacuee properties, I felt that we had succeeded in opening a door which has been shut for too long and that it would be possible to make some progress before long. It was not possible for me, in the short time at my disposal in Karachi, to discuss these matters in detail. The general principles were considered and I expressed the hope that we might, as far as possible, apply the rules that we had laid down for Bengal to West Pakistan and India.[3] This is a difficult and intricate matter and all kinds of new and rather novel laws come into existence. I feel, however, that we shall be able to go ahead before long. We are considering this new approach to this problem now and probably there will be a special conference between the two countries to consider the evacuee properties.

7. I might mention that the International Red Cross of Geneva are sending a number of doctors and medical stores worth nearly 20 lakhs of rupees for Bengal and Assam. They are making this generous gift to us, and separately to Pakistan, and all that we have to pay is the air passage money of the doctors. We have gladly agreed to this proposal.

3. The Bengal Agreement liberalized conditions for removal of household effects including jewellery and cash, restored rights of ownership of immovable property and allowed the sale and exchange of such property.

8. The ice has also been broken between India and Pakistan in regard to trade. The trade agreement[4] is useful and helpful to both us and Pakistan. It does not go very far, but it does make a big difference and I hope that another step in advance will be taken soon.

9. The Education Ministry have suggested that the Inspectorates of Education in the States should be utilized to promote communal understanding in educational institutions. I think this is an excellent suggestion. I think also that our senior students, during their holidays, might well devote themselves to this highly important task. Whatever our views may be about political or economic problems, any man or woman with any sense will realize that no progress can be made unless we have this communal understanding. This is a challenge to us, and if we fail in this challenge we dub ourselves as backward and little-minded people lacking the culture that makes a nation grow and prosper.

10. The challenge is there, not so much from Pakistan, but from those of our own people who can only think and act on the strictly communal plane. It is extraordinary how soon many of us have forgotten one of the basic principles and planks of the Congress – inter-communal unity – for which we laboured ever since Gandhiji came on the political scene more than thirty years ago. The issue is a clear one, though attempts are made to befog it. We have talked about a secular State. Often enough, those who talked most about it have understood it least and belied it by their own words and actions. We have to decide firmly and precisely what we stand for in this important matter. There can be no half-way house and no sitting on the fence.

4. A short-term agreement for three months was signed in Karachi on 21 April 1950 by which India agreed to supply certain essential commodities like cotton textiles, jute manufactures, mustard oil and steel in exchange for supply by Pakistan of 800,000 bales of raw jute. To avoid currency difficulties, both sides agreed that the transaction would be in rupees through a special account maintained in India.

Nor can we adopt a high philosophical attitude and allow matters to take their course. That is not the way of free men and women or of people who want to mould their destiny and not be mere playthings of forces they cannot control. Therefore, for all of us in India, and more especially Congressmen and Congresswomen, this issue of communal unity and a secular State must be made perfectly clear. We have played about with this idea sufficiently long and have moved away from it far enough. We must go back and go back not secretly or apologetically, but openly and rather aggressively, though with all courtesy. The Working Committee of the Congress has, of course, supported the Agreement and reiterated its old policy. But something more is necessary and that is for all Congress Committees to take this up as a question having first priority and as something which has been the very basis and foundation of our struggle for freedom. There can be no compromise on this issue, for any compromise can only mean a surrender of our principles and a betrayal of the cause of India's freedom. It must be remembered that once we surrender, even in part, on this issue, then disruptive forces come into play and carry this process further and further. Our society has for long ages past been very loosely knit with all kinds of inner divisions. Gandhiji and the great Congress movement broke down many of these inner walls and built up a widespread structure which symbolized the unity of India on every plane, though it had not interfered with the rich diversity of our country.

11. In olden days our loose-knit society had both an element of weakness and an element of strength in it and because of this strength it survived. In conditions as they exist today, no such loose-knit society could survive for long. If, therefore, we let loose disruptive forces, they will be too powerful for us to control and they will go much further than anyone can possibly imagine now. Therefore, quite apart from principle and our well-established policy, even a small degree of wisdom and foresight should convince us that there is only one way for free India to take and that is the way of breaking down barriers

amongst ourselves, and more especially barriers put up in the name of religion or caste. All these barriers weaken the nation at a time when the utmost unity and strength are necessary, both from the domestic and the international points of view.

12. Whatever the consequences of the Agreement of April 8th, there can be no doubt that it has enhanced our prestige all over the world. It has also given us confidence in ourselves, because we solved the problem with our own unaided efforts and not relying upon a third party. It is very seldom that two countries, inflamed with passion, going to the brink of war, pull themselves up and deliberately walk in a different direction. The real thing that counts ultimately for a people is their inner strength. The processes that were going on before the Agreement were snapping that strength and making us, as they made Pakistan, full of fear and hatred. The mere stopping of those processes is gain enough and strengthens us for further advance in future.

13. We have many problems to face, but for the present the most important and basic problem is the implementation of the Agreement in spirit and letter. In spirit, I would like to emphasize, because the letter by itself does not help much. The most pleasing feature of the past few weeks has been the psychological change and this is more important than even practical consequences. We have to take advantage of this new situation and not allow it to relapse. Governments and the machinery of the State can help very greatly in this. They will help only if all of them are imbued with a certain crusading zeal and a firm faith in the principles we stand for.

14. Parliament passed the Representation of People Bill just before it adjourned.[5] This was to facilitate arrangements being made for the general elections. I repeat what I have said before that these elections must be held in the early part of next year and before the monsoon. This is of the highest importance, and

5. See *ante*, p. 78.

I am sorry that some States do not quite appreciate this urgency. We have impressed this upon our Election Commissioner, Shri Sukumar Sen, and I would like you to impress this upon your officers concerned with this business. Our Election Commissioner will be visiting a number of States to discuss these coming elections and the preparations that have to be made for them. I hope you will give every co-operation to him in this task.

15. Some little time ago our representatives went to South Africa to discuss the proposed round table conference.[6] On the whole, that meeting was a successful one, though it did not produce any substantial result. It is most unfortunate that the South African Union Government should persist in passing legislation which is harmful to Indians and others there.[7] It seems to me clear that if the South African Government insists on this, then the whole basis for a round table conference is knocked out. We are in communication with the South African Government.[8]

6. See *ante*, pp. 28 and 49.

7. The highly discriminatory legislative enactments of the South African Government between February and July 1950 were the Group Areas Act providing for the separation of different ethnic groups and races, the amended Asiatic Land Tenure Act which introduced segregation for the purposes of trade and extended its application to areas other than Natal, and the Population Registration Act providing for compulsory registration and issue of identity cards to all citizens to emphasize racial differences.

8. The Indian Government in their *aide memoire* of 5 April 1950 had called upon the South African Government not to proceed with the Group Areas Bill and prosecution of Indians under the Asiatic Land Tenure Amendment Act pending the holding of the round table conference. In their note of 29 April, the Government of India, regretting the South African Government's refusal to comply with their request, stated that action under these enactments was "bound to create an impression that segregation is the settled and irrevocable policy of the Union Government, and that the only purpose of the proposed round table conference can be to discuss compulsory repatriation of Indians from South Africa."

16. I hope you saw or read the statement I made in regard to the Fair Wages Bill.[9] We attach great importance to this, but unfortunately we could not pass it during the last session of Parliament. We hope to publish the Bill soon for public information and criticism.

17. After considerable thought certain decisions have been taken in regard to cotton policy for the next year.[10] It has become essential for us to grow our own cotton. Otherwise, we are dependent upon foreign sources. We, therefore, wish to encourage cotton cultivation. Certain decisions have been taken by the Government of India in this respect and they have no doubt been communicated to you. Generally speaking, we are convinced that there should be no decontrol of cotton prices at present. We have suggested the remission of land revenue on additional land brought under cotton cultivation.

18. I have practically decided to visit Indonesia early in June. Just about this time, our naval squadron consisting of a cruiser[11] and some destroyers, etc., had organized a cruise in South East Asia waters. At the request of the Navy, I have agreed to go to Indonesia in our cruiser. We shall sail probably from Cochin on the 2nd June. I shall spend about 8 days in Indonesia and return by air, stopping at Singapore and Rangoon on the way.

9. On 18 April 1950, Nehru assured Parliament of his Government's commitment to proceed with the Fair Wages Bill as quickly as possible as the Government had been party to the tripartite agreement of 18 December 1947 on this issue.

10. On 2 May 1950, the Government announced remission of land revenue and provision of other incentives to cotton-growers and asked the State Governments to remove all restrictions on cotton growing and provide irrigation facilities for it.

11. I.N.S. *Delhi*.

19. Parliament ended in the course of the last fortnight after passing a great deal of legislation. The next session is not likely to take place before late August or September.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

14

New Delhi
17 May, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Since I wrote to you last, a change has taken place in the Central Cabinet.[1] In accordance with the new Constitution, a new Council of Ministers had to be formed. Normally this should have been done soon after the new Constitution came into effect. But we were then at the beginning of our budget session and it was not at all desirable to effect any change at that stage. Other disturbing events followed in East and West Bengal. At last, this long overdue change was brought about early this month. I submitted my resignation as well as the Cabinet's resignation to the President,[2] and he was good enough to charge me with the duty of forming a new Cabinet. I accepted that charge and presented a list of names to him.[3] This list, as you know, contained the names of many old colleagues. There were already two vacancies in the Cabinet at that time due to the resignation of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Shri K.C. Neogy.

2. At the time of presenting this list, it was stated that Dr. John Matthai had expressed his desire to resign from his office of Minister, but had agreed to stay on till the end of the month. Shri Mohanlal Saksena[4] had actually sent in his resignation to

1. A new Council of Ministers with Nehru as Prime Minister was sworn in on 6 May 1950.

2. On 5 May 1950.

3. The list included the names of Hare Krushna Mahtab, K.M. Munshi and C.C. Biswas. C. Rajagopalachari was also invited to join the Cabinet.

4. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 150.

me sometime earlier.[5] At my request, he also agreed to stay on till the end of the month. A third Minister who will go out of the Cabinet at the end of the month is Shri Jairamdas Doulatram.[6] He is going to undertake the very difficult charge of the Governorship of Assam. The new Ministers are: Shri C. Rajagopalachari[7] and Shri Sri Prakasa,[8] both of whom will come about the end of the month, and Shri Hare Krushna Mahtab,[9] till recently Chief Minister of Orissa, and Shri K.M. Munshi.[10]

3. The Government that resigned early this month had been in existence since the 15th August, 1947, the day of the coming of our independence. As a matter of fact, many of them had been in office since September 1946, when for the first time we came into Government.[11] Ever since August 1947, this Cabinet had continued, with minor changes and additions.[12] This was a fairly long period for a Cabinet to continue more or less unchanged. During this period the Cabinet had to face very severe crises and shouldered heavy responsibilities. It will be for the historian to judge subsequently how we discharged our task. No doubt we committed mistakes, but I think that it can be said with truth that we worked to the utmost of our capacity and ability and with the desire to serve India during this very

5. On 30 April 1950.

6. For b. fn. see Vol. 1, p. 84.

7. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p.141.

8. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 278.

9. (b.1899). Congressman from Orissa; Chief Minister of Orissa, 1946-50 and 1957-60; Union Minister of Industries and Commerce, 1950-52; Governor of Bombay, 1955-56; member, Lok Sabha, 1962-67.

10. (1891-1971). Home Minister in Bombay, 1937-39; Union Minister of Food and Agriculture, 1950-52; Governor of Uttar Pradesh, 1952-57; later joined the Swatantra Party; author of several books in Gujarati and English and founder of Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1938.

11. These included Vallabhbhai Patel, Baldev Singh, John Matthai and Jagjivan Ram. Maulana Azad had joined the Ministry in December 1946.

12. Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and N.V. Gadgil had joined on 14 August 1947, Gopalaswami Ayyangar in September 1947 and Jairamdas Doulatram in December 1947.

difficult period of our history. I am sorry that one of the most eminent members of our Cabinet, Dr. John Matthai, is leaving us. His high reputation for ability and integrity was a great asset to our Government and he has been throughout these years one of the strongest pillars of our Government.

4. I am sorry also that Shri Mohanlal Saksena is leaving us. His Ministry of Rehabilitation has often been severely criticized and its faults and errors of commission have been pointed out. Perhaps no Ministry had to deal with such difficult human problems as the Ministry of Rehabilitation. In criticizing this Ministry, we are apt to forget the great achievements to its credit and only think of what has not been done. The problem of dealing with millions of displaced human beings, many of them in a state of great physical and mental distress, involved a continuous and tremendous strain on those responsible for its solution. Our first Minister of Rehabilitation was Shri K.C. Neogy, who worked hard and conscientiously and achieved good results. But after a period the strain was too great on him and we decided to change his portfolio. This burden was subsequently shouldered by Shri Mohanlal Saksena and his advisers and colleagues. The problem of rehabilitating large numbers of people still remains, but it is worth while to find out what has already been done in this line, for the achievements are remarkable, if we compare the conditions of today with the conditions that existed three and a half years ago.

5. It must be remembered that we have had to face not only the immediate and colossal consequences of the partition, but also a continuous stream of refugees coming to India during these three years. In the last half of 1947, huge migrations took place between Western Pakistan and India. That was the basic problem and it was a problem of staggering dimensions. But this business did not stop there. Migrations continued, though on a lesser scale from Sind and from East Bengal throughout 1948 and a large part of 1949. As a result, practically the entire Hindu and Sikh population of Sind, with the exception of about one hundred fifty thousand Hindus, including about one

hundred thousand people of the scheduled classes, left Sind for India. Also over a million and a half Hindus left East Bengal for India. Thus, the burden on the Ministry of Rehabilitation was a continuing and an ever-growing one. During the last few months, we have seen another upheaval in East and West Bengal and Assam and huge migrations again in those areas, as well as from Uttar Pradesh.

6. Thus, the problem of rehabilitation is very far from solved, though a great deal has been done. We have gained experience and we can deal with the problem now in a more methodical way.

7. The new Ministers who have joined the Government or who are going to join it soon are all able and experienced men, well-known to the public life of India. They are leading Congressmen and some of them have held high posts in the administration of the country. I welcome specially Shri C. Rajagopalachari who has consented, not without reluctance, to come out of his retirement to serve the country. I felt that I was justified in requesting him to do so because of his ripe wisdom and the need for that wisdom in the affairs of the country today. I am grateful to him for his agreeing to join us at great personal inconvenience.

8. The new Cabinet is facing our problems with good heart and the new Ministers who have already joined have brought energy and vitality to their task. I am sure that all of us will pull together as a team and face our problems and difficulties with courage and confidence.

9. The two dominating issues at present are Indo-Pakistan relations with all their ramifications, and the economic policy to be pursued in this country. The Agreement of April 8th, 1950 brought about a radical change in our approach to the former problem. The Agreement itself, though important and with far-reaching results, was really only a part of the big psychological change that came into evidence immediately

afterwards. No one can presume to say that we have gone far in solving the various problems between India and Pakistan. They are difficult and intricate and the legacy of the past pursues us. There is Kashmir about which the two viewpoints differ radically and no obvious solution is in prospect. So far as we are concerned, our position is clear and we have already shown our spirit of accommodation to the utmost limit. There is little room for us to say anything more. Sir Owen Dixon, the U.N. mediator, is due here sometime this month.[13]

10. The other issues between us and Pakistan are being tackled now in a different spirit. No great progress has been made thus far, but this new approach promises substantial results, in regard to both the evacuee property problem and canal waters.

11. The Agreement of April 8 related chiefly to East and West Bengal and Assam, and the major test of the implementation of that Agreement was its effect on migrations of people from one country to another. There has undoubtedly been an improvement in this matter, but I am afraid the improvement has not been quite so marked as we had hoped. One of the reasons for this, of course, is that facilities for travelling and carrying moveable property and jewellery have encouraged people to cross the border. A significant feature of this traffic of people between East and West Bengal is the growing number of persons who are going back to their old province or homes. This is undoubtedly a healthy sign. To give you an instance: from the 11th to the 12 th May, 10,534 Hindus came to West Bengal from East Bengal. On the same day, 6,041 Hindus went to East Pakistan by railway from West Bengal. Of these 6,041 Hindus, a little over 2,000 were women and children. It is probable that many people are going back in order to get their properties or bring some of their belongings, but it is highly unlikely that such large numbers of women and

13. He arrived in New Delhi on 27 May1950.

children would go back unless they intended remaining in East Bengal. Thus, it may be said that quite a substantial number of Hindus are returning to East Bengal.

12. During the same period, i.e., from 11th to 12th May, 4,664 Muslims left West Bengal for East Pakistan. At the same time, 2,509 Muslims came back to West Bengal from East Pakistan. Thus, both in the case of Hindus and Muslims, there is a marked flow back of population. We get many reports still of petty incidents occurring in East Bengal, and sometimes in West Bengal, which harass the minorities. But generally speaking, conditions may be said to have improved.

13. The latest figures received of the exodus on either side confirm this improvement as also the growing tendency of migrants to return to their homes. On the 15th/16th May, 7,843 Hindus came to West Bengal from East Bengal, while 4,821 Hindus left by train for East Pakistan from West Bengal. In this figure of 4,821, there were 1,500 women and children. On the same day, 3,446 Muslims left West Bengal for East Pakistan and 2,054 Muslims arrived in West Bengal from East Pakistan. Of the latter figure, over 900 were women and children.

14. One unhealthy feature of the situation has been the continuation of the exodus of Muslims from the U.P. and surrounding areas to Western Pakistan. This averaged four thousand a day, then it went down to two thousand, and then it rose again to five thousand and over. There has not been any incident in the U.P. for over two and a half months and yet this exodus has continued. Partly this was due to a mistaken belief that there was plenty of work at high wages in West Pakistan. But undoubtedly it is partly due to the atmosphere of fear which has affected minorities in various parts of Pakistan and India. The U.P. Government has tried its utmost to check this exodus and Congress workers have also helped in this process. We have also announced[14] that all the Muslims who have gone

14. On 13 May 1950.

from India to West Pakistan since the beginning of March can come back and be reinstated in their old properties.[15] This is an application of the principle we have accepted for the two Bengals. The Pakistan Government has recently announced that it will prevent any further ingress into West Pakistan of people from India.[16] We have pointed out to them[17] that this may well have a contrary effect. In fact, the moment there was a rumour of this, the exodus increased because people felt they would not have a chance of going later.

15. Early this month, a rather remarkable gathering took place in Delhi. This was a joint meeting of the newspaper editors conferences of India and Pakistan.[18] A large number of Pakistan editors came and fraternized with the Indian editors. The whole proceedings were remarkable for their friendliness and desire to co-operate in bringing about normal relations between India and Pakistan. Generally speaking, it may be said that the press of India and Pakistan has behaved well and helped in implementing the Agreement of April 8th. Unfortunately, there are a few exceptions still.

16. It is difficult to have exact figures of the migrations during the last three or four months. But such information as we possess indicates that uptil now about 17 lakhs of non-Muslims have crossed over from East Bengal to India, i.e., to West Bengal, Tripura and Assam. During the same period, about 7 lakhs of Muslims have crossed over from India (i.e., West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, as well as U.P., Rajasthan, etc.) to East and West Pakistan.

15. To facilitate the process of scrutiny and verification of the claims of Muslim migrants, India requested Pakistan to furnish a complete list of such persons before 31 December 1950.

16. On 12 May, Pakistan decided to seal its border from 20 May 1950.

17. On 13 May 1950.

18. On 4 and 5 May 1950.

17. Among the new Ministers appointed is Shri C.C. Biswas,[19] Central Minister in terms of the Indo-Pakistan Agreement. On behalf of Pakistan, Dr. Malik[20] has been appointed. These two Central Ministers are meeting in Calcutta[21] and drawing up their procedure and programme of work. They are both starting with the fixed intention of co-operating with each other in the solution of the problems they have to deal with.

18. There has been a resumption of goods traffic between India and Pakistan and the trade talks have also resulted in some agreement.[22]

19. It may be said, therefore, that, on the whole, we are progressing in the right direction, though the pace is rather slow and many hurdles remain. Unfortunately, some of the speeches delivered by the Prime Minister of Pakistan in the United States[23] have not always been happy in so far as Indo-Pakistan relations are concerned and there has been a good deal of criticism in the press of India in regard to them. Nevertheless, our main approach to this problem must remain the same. We have to choose between two basic approaches:

19. (1888-1960). Lawyer from Calcutta; member, Indian Legislative Assembly, 1930-37; judge, Calcutta High Court, 1937-48; Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University, 1949-50; Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs, 1950-52; Union Minister for Law, 1952-57.

20. A.M. Malik (b. 1905). Physician and politician from East Bengal; Minister, East Bengal, 1947-48; Pakistan Minister for Minority Affairs, 1950-52 and of Labour and Health, 1949-55; Ambassador to Switzerland, 1955-58, to China, 1958-61, and to Philippines, 1961-65; High Commissioner to Australia, 1965-67; Minister of Health, Labour, Social Welfare and Family Planning, 1970-71; sentenced to life imprisonment by Bangladesh Government in December 1971, but released in December 1973.

21. On 17 May 1950.

22. See *ante*, p. 83.

23. Liaquat Ali Khan visited the United States from 3 to 26 May 1950. On 5 May 1950, he said in Washington that Pakistan would welcome a U.S. guarantee of its "territorial integrity." Two days later, at a press conference, he again stated that Pakistan needed the guarantee because of "possible aggression from India."

one may be called the general Congress approach representing the Congress viewpoint in regard to communal matters during the last thirty years or more, and the other is the communal approach which is ideologically represented by the Hindu Mahasabha and like organizations. There are variations and gradations in between the two. But the choice is ultimately between these two. Because of the fact that Pakistan, from its very inception, has functioned in a communal way, we have naturally been affected by it and I regret to say that large numbers of our people, including Congressmen, have become rather communal-minded. That reaction is understandable, but it is not a right reaction if we judge it from the Congress point of view. To function along the old Congress lines does not mean weakness or appeasement; the old Congress was neither weak nor compromising where fundamental issues were concerned. But it did approach its problems, whether they were communal or Indo-British, in a particular way which Gandhiji had taught us. That way was not only ideologically correct, but, as events have shown, practically good and yielded results.

20. During the last two and a half years or more we have gradually drifted, because of the pressure of circumstances, towards a communal reaction to the communal problem. That way lay no solution, but only a continuous and mutual deterioration. We have pulled ourselves up and we have seen how popular sentiment, both in India and Pakistan, has reacted favourably to this change. This shows the way people's minds work and how they welcome any opportunity for co-operation and peace. Where principles are concerned, we have to be firm and unyielding, but in so far as the approach is concerned, if we have to follow what Gandhiji told us and what the Congress attempted to practise, we have to be friendly, co-operative, and even generous. Friendliness and generosity do not mean giving up anything which is vital, but represent a state of the mind which inevitably produces like results.

21. There is no doubt that the Indo-Pakistan Agreement and its immediate consequences produced marked results all over

the world and increased our stature as it increased also the stature of Pakistan. The contrary approach, which may be said to be represented by the Hindu Mahasabha and like organizations, is not only completely negative but is essentially based on vague ideas of violence, hatred and conflict, in the hope that out of all this something good might possibly come. That is neither sensible nor logical nor good morals nor good policy. It is an adolescent way of thinking and action, giving way to an urge of the moment without thinking where it might lead to.

22. The second major problem, to which I have referred, is that of economic policy. That is undoubtedly the basic problem of the country. I am glad that in dealing with it we have the advantage of the advice of the Planning Commission. This Planning Commission, consisting of eminent and earnest men devoted to their work, is likely to be of the greatest help to Government in arriving at conclusions and in drawing up policy for the future. The Planning Commission has the advantage of viewing the entire picture as a whole and not losing itself in small parts of it. I drew your attention, in my last letter,[24] to the planning conference that had taken place in Delhi. This planning conference passed a number of resolutions[25] and also adopted generally a long memorandum[26] which was placed before it by the Congress Planning Committee. You must have received both these resolutions and the memorandum.[27] I shall

24. In fact, no such reference was made in the letter of 2 May 1950.

25. The resolutions passed on 25 and 26 April suggested measures such as lifting of unnecessary controls, intensification of the land reclamation programme, encouragement of cultivation of cotton and jute and of increase in the yield of agricultural produce, restriction on import of consumer goods, promotion of exports, welfare of labour and encouragement of cotton and village industries for the planned development of the country.

26. The memorandum envisaged an integrated development of the rural and the industrial sectors within the broad framework of a decentralized co-operative economy. It was adopted by the planning conference on 25 April 1950 as part of a "Objectives" resolution.

27. Not printed.

send them to you again, because I should like you and your Government and officers to consider them with care. While the Planning Commission is not committed to this memorandum, it views it with a large measure of agreement. This conference laid stress on various activities on behalf of Government and the public. In particular, it pointed out that it was essential to activise the public if any great results were to be obtained. The Commission will probably address you on this subject separately and make some suggestions for your consideration and comment. One of the important subjects for us to consider is that of integration of rural and industrial economy.

23. Government is often criticized and a healthy criticism is to be welcomed. But there has been an increasing tendency on the part of industry and business to criticize Government in unrestrained terms. Recently, the Bombay Millowners' Association did so and made certain proposals which were certainly to the advantage of the millowners, whatever other results may have flowed from them.[28] But what struck me as unfortunate was the possible consequence of this criticism in creating alarm in the minds of the farmers. Whoever else may be liable to criticism, I do not think the millowners can possibly consider themselves blameless. I think that our friends in business and industry have shown a lack of restraint in their utterances and in their criticisms which is unfortunate because it creates those very conditions which they deplore.

24. There has recently been held a meeting of Foreign Ministers in London which has attracted a good deal of

28. On 7 May 1950, the Bombay Millowners' Association criticized the Government's policy on cotton as offering no inducement to the farmers to shift to the cultivation of cotton. It asked the Government to lift the control on the price of cloth and yarn to stop the closure of mills and consequent unemployment.

attention.[29] This meeting dealt with the problems of Europe and also probably of South East Asia. It is rather odd, in the context of today, for a number of Western powers to discuss and try to decide policies in regard to Asia, without consulting Asian countries.[30] It has not apparently been fully realized yet by them that no policy affecting Asia can be successful without the full co-operation of Asian countries. So far as we are concerned, we want to be friendly with every country, but we do not propose to be bound down by any decisions to which we are not consenting parties.

25. At the present moment, a Commonwealth Conference is being held at Sydney to consider the economic development of South East Asia.[31] We are represented there by Shri Ramaswamy Mudaliar[32] and an adviser. It is not clear yet whether this conference will yield any substantial results.[33]

29. The Foreign Ministers of the United States, Britain and France, in a communique issued on 13 May after meeting for three days, expressed a keen desire to see the return of the Germans to "the community of free peoples" of Europe, but regretted that the Soviet refusal to permit the people of its occupied zone to rejoin their fellow countrymen gave little hope of a peace treaty with Germany which could pave the way for emergence of a democratic and united Germany.

30. The communique of 13 May 1950 also stated that the three signatories would support the new Governments in South East Asia to check the growing menace of "Communist imperialism." They called upon all the Governments in the region to co-operate in raising the standard of living of their peoples and expose the claims of Communists that they were encouraging nationalist movements when in fact they were seeking to control and exploit them in furtherance of their "expansionist policies "

31. The Commonwealth Consultative Committee on Economic Development of South East Asia met from 15 to 19 May 1950.

32. (1887-1976). Member for Commerce, 1939-42, and for Supply, 1943-46 in the Viceroy's Executive Council; Dewan of Mysore, 1946-49; member, Rajya Sabha, 1952-62; Vice-Chancellor, Kerala University, 1953-57.

33. A plan for three years, proposed by Australia, which later came to be known as the Colombo Plan provided for technical assistance to the countries of South and South East Asia. £8 million earmarked for this purpose was to be administered by a bureau set up at Colombo.

26. The treaties of friendship and trade and commerce with Nepal have been finalized,[34] but internal conditions in Nepal are by no means satisfactory and there appears to be a growing opposition to the present regime there.

27. Chandernagore was taken over from the French on the 2nd May. The problem of the other French possessions still remains unsolved.

28. As I have already informed you, I intend going to Indonesia. I shall sail from Cochin in our cruiser I.N.S. *Delhi*, on June 2nd. I reach Djakarta on June 7th and spend ten days there. I come back by air, spending two days in Singapore and three days in Rangoon. This means that I shall be away from India for about three weeks.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

34. See *ante*, pp. 47-48.

15

New Delhi
26 May, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

I am writing to you about the application of the permit system and the evacuee property laws. Both of these have been forced upon us by strange circumstances and because of the example of Pakistan. I suppose it was unavoidable that we should have something of this kind. And yet it must always be remembered that both these systems are exceedingly unusual and distasteful, and almost unknown to domestic or international law.

Whatever the laws or rules may be in regard to these, what is much more important is the manner of their application. Many cases have come to me, which have surprised me greatly, for they seem to me a very unusual and unjustifiable extension of the law as it is. It is clear that many of our lower officers have no clear notion of how to apply these laws and much is left to their discretion. That is unfortunate, for these are not merely individual cases, but something which has far-reaching repercussions.

Since the recent Agreement with Pakistan, there has been some talk of doing away with the permit system and of strictly limiting the evacuee property laws to those who have been affected by them in the past. That is, for the future, they will not affect any new person. I do not know what the result of these talks will be, but it is very likely that some modification will be made both in regard to the permit system and the evacuee property laws.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

At the present moment, we are facing a heavy exodus of Muslims chiefly from the U.P. and partly from Rajasthan and Delhi. We are trying to stop this to the best of our ability, but we have not achieved much success thus far. It is rather odd that while we are trying to stop this exodus, which brings considerable discredit upon us, we should at the same time try to put out a few odd Muslims who may be considered undesirable. Apart from the justice or otherwise of these cases, this action of ours has a certain effect on the overall situation and tends to encourage the exodus by producing a certain feeling of insecurity.

The permit system was introduced originally to stop large numbers of Muslims coming from Pakistan to India. You will remember that neither the permit system nor the evacuee property laws were ever applied to Eastern Pakistan or West Bengal. A subsequent development of the permit system was to prevent undesirable persons from coming to India. That was justifiable. A later development has been to push out people we do not like from India, if we get a chance to do so.

Thus we have sometimes used the permit system for a purpose for which it was not and could not be intended. I get reports from some States sometimes to the effect that a certain person is undesirable and therefore the issue or otherwise of a permit to him or an extension of a permit should be governed by this fact. This is a mixture of issues, which is always bad in such cases. If a person is undesirable, we can proceed against him for that. But we cannot take advantage of the permit system to deal with him, except to keep out altogether undesirables who wish to come to India.

In regard to evacuee property also, the application has sometimes been most unfortunate. Of course, the whole conception of an 'intending evacuee' is extraordinary. The kind of cases that come up before me sometimes amaze me, for they cannot be justified by any normal law or procedure. Such cases have a far-reaching effect, as they tend to frighten large

numbers of people and make them feel insecure. Our action thus results in certain consequences which we are seeking to avoid in another sphere of activity. That is not very logical or wise.

Some of our more enthusiastic junior custodians seem to imagine that they have been appointed to function as some kind of inquisitors. The fact of the matter is that there is a certain vagueness and our instructions are not clear enough.

However that may be, I wish to draw your earnest attention to these matters. We must remember that the permit system is not a device for us to push out people whom we do not like either on moral or political grounds.

Secondly, we must remember that people who went away from India for a while before the permit system was introduced cannot be punished by some subsequent enactment.

Thirdly, in view of the Agreement with Pakistan as well as the exodus of Muslims to West Pakistan from the U.P., etc., we have to tone down our activities in regard to these matters and not do anything which adds to the prevailing fear and discontent.

Fourthly, we have to make it clear to our custodians and assistant custodians that their functions are not policy functions but semi-judicial ones and they must not harass any people in carrying out those functions. They have to remember that they must function in a way so as to cause the least disturbance or disquiet. If they cannot follow this policy clearly, then they must make room for others, who understand Government policy and are prepared to follow it.

We cannot allow the larger interests of the nations, as well as the credit and self-respect of the country, to suffer because of the over-enthusiasm of some of our people.

The general principle of law that we follow is that a person has to be proved guilty before he is punished. But often enough this principle is not followed in regard to evacuee property and the burden of proof is cast on the unhappy person against whom steps are taken. This is patently wrong.

I am writing to you rather briefly on this subject, just to indicate how my mind is working. Big issues are involved and we cannot act in a petty way. I hope, therefore, that your Government will consider these matters and that you will issue clear and explicit instructions to your officers as to how to deal with them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

16

New Delhi
29 May, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

The Indo-Pakistan Agreement of 8th April 1950 expressed the hope that migrants would return to their original homes. Certain provisions were agreed to about the return of the lands and properties if they went back by the end of this year! At the same time travel to and fro between East and West Bengal and Assam was made easier. As a result of this, a certain number, which is progressively increasing, of migrants from East Bengal, are returning At the same time the exodus from East Bengal is also continuing We hope that gradually the latter will lessen and the return of migrants will increase. This will of course depend on many factors.

In any event, it is quite certain that all those people who have come away from East Bengal, or even a majority of them, are hardly likely to go back. What then are we to do about them? Are we to wait till the end of December to find out who is going back and who is not and meanwhile, support these people by some kind of relief or work and make no attempt to rehabilitate them? That seems to me to be a wrong policy from every point of view. Because this would result in large numbers of people, many of whom will inevitably stay in India, being kept in a state of uncertainty. Also it will result in heavy expenditure without any permanent result or rehabilitation and we shall have to spend more money on rehabilitation later on.

*A special letter addressed to Chief Ministers of Bihar, Assam, Orissa, West Bengal and Madras only

will in the world we can only rehabilitate a relatively small number of those who have come. So that ultimately it will not probably come in the way of the return of many of the migrants. Therefore it is desirable to proceed with our schemes of rehabilitation and to settle as many people as possible. This applies to West Bengal and Assam primarily. It applies also to the States of Bihar and Orissa as well as Madras, which have generously offered their co-operation in receiving these migrants and thus relieving somewhat the burden on the more affected States.

I trust that your Government will view this problem in this way and encourage and facilitate the rehabilitation of these people, not waiting till the end of December 1950.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

17

New Delhi
30 May, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am sending you my fortnightly letter rather earlier than usual, because early tomorrow morning I start on the journey which will ultimately land me at Djakarta in Indonesia. This visit has long been in my mind and I have looked forward to it and, if I may say so, our friends in Indonesia have also looked forward to it. Few countries can have such friendly relations with one another as India and Indonesia have today. We have no alliance or pact and no special trade or commercial contacts have developed. Yet we have been drawn to each other not so much because of political or economic advantage, but because of other and more unsubstantial reasons. In the distant past of India, there were innumerable contacts with the people of South East Asia, and among them probably the closest to us were the peoples of Indonesia. Even today there are numerous survivals of those old contacts. Indeed, if we have to see and admire some of the finest examples of Indian architecture, we have to go to Java.

2. Those old contacts between the two countries ceased several hundred years ago and both fell under foreign domination. Most of us even forgot, or never knew, that old history of intimate relationship with the people of Indonesia. Gradually it came back to us by the labour of scholars and a new vista opened out for us.

3. It was really, however, after the end of the Second World War, less than five years ago, that a new chapter in our relationship began. It is difficult to say who started it, because

on both sides there was this desire to meet. Almost it might be said that there was some destiny about it which brought us together and turned our minds and hearts to each other, even though there was no obvious reason for it. And so today we look at each other with a degree of affection and comradeship which seldom goes from one country to another.

4. I am very happy to go to this very friendly country, whose President came to us at the time of the inauguration of our Republic and I feel that there is a significance in this visit of mine just as there was a significance in President Soekarno coming to Delhi.[1] Old memories revive and new hopes fill our minds. In the context of world affairs, there can be little doubt that South East Asia is becoming a hub and a storm-centre. This is particularly so in Indo-China. Mighty changes have taken place in South East Asia during the last three or four years. Our own country, after much travail, has gained her independence, but the travail and sorrow did not end and we have pursued since then difficult and sometimes a heart-breaking task. Yet some inner faith in the destiny of our country and our people has kept us going and I have little doubt that that inner faith is justified.

5 That great neighbour of ours, China, has emerged for the first time in history as a strong centralized State. That in itself is an event of world-shaking importance. Some are afraid of it, some welcome it, but whether we like it or not, it is an event of the highest importance in the present and in the future. In the southern mainland of Asia, there has been trouble and conflict in Burma and Indo-China, and Malaya has had continuing disorder for these three years. Now Indonesia emerges as an independent State and that event also changes the face of South East Asia and is of particular interest to us.

6. So in this present age of ours we see this changing, dynamic mass of humanity that lives in South East Asia and round about, gradually becoming the focus of the world's attention,

1 See *ante*, p 16

for in it lie seeds both of discord and possible peace of the world. None can answer that question yet, but all of us who live in this part of the world have a great responsibility in shaping that answer and determining it to the extent that we can. India cannot disclaim that responsibility, for the whole course of history and her geography have led her to it. We want no entanglements, for our troubles are many and it is our first duty to look after our own problems before we think of others. But the choice is not ours. As an independent nation of great potential power, we cannot disclaim the responsibilities that come with independence.

7. I shall go to Indonesia and spend ten days there; far too short a time for that country and yet too long for me to be away. On my return journey, I shall visit Singapore and Burma, where I hope to meet the leader of the Burmese people and their Prime Minister, Thakin Nu.

8. On the eve of my departure, we have completed our reconstructed Cabinet, with one exception. Today some of the new Ministers[2] attended the swearing-in-ceremony before the President. One new Minister was unfortunately not present owing to ill health. We hope, however, that Shri C. Rajagopalachari will soon be with us here to help us and guide us in many ways.

9. I wrote to you previously that the two major problems before us related to our economic policy and our relations with Pakistan. So far as the economic policy is concerned, we have now the great advantage of a Planning Commission composed of eminent and earnest men who believe in planning. The members of the Planning Commission are drawn from entirely different sectors of national life and have different experiences behind them. And yet I have noticed with great satisfaction that these members have been working like a happy team with complete understanding of each other. I expect substantial results from the labours of this Commission. Some people have

2. Sri Prakasa, C.D. Deshmukh and Ajit Prasad Jain.

criticized it and said that it has not done anything wonderful yet. That is strange criticism. It has been in existence just two months and even during this early and brief period it has done good work. Planning at any time, and more so for a vast country like ours, is a big and complex affair. I appealed to you sometime ago for the co-operation of your Government with our planning authority[3] and I am grateful to many States for their ready response to this proposal.

10. You will have noticed that a Member of the Planning Commission, Shri Chintaman Deshmukh,[4] is now our Finance Minister. I hesitated at first to invite him to undertake this most important office. I hesitated because I did not wish him to leave the Planning Commission, to which both he and I attached great importance. But on fuller consideration of this matter, I came to what might be called the inevitable conclusion of asking him to take charge of the Finance portfolio. His appointment has been almost universally acclaimed. He continues to be a member of the Planning Commission. This combination may well help us in bringing about the closest co-operation between the Government and the Planning Commission.

11. Our new Ministers, Shri Hare Krushna Mahtab, and Shri K.M. Munshi, have already somewhat shaken up their Ministries with their energy and driving power.[5] Shri Sri Prakasa begins his ministerial career today. I doubt if any other Governor has left a province surrounded by such universal affection, esteem and regret as Sri Prakasaji earned for himself in Assam. He has come to another, and perhaps even more important, sphere of activity and I have no doubt that the Ministry of Commerce will improve and prosper under his care.

3. See *ante*, pp. 46 54-55.

4. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 484.

5. Mahtab had taken charge of the Ministry of Industry and Supply and Munshi was entrusted with the portfolio of Food and Agriculture.

12. The new Cabinet, I venture to say, is stronger and more homogeneous than its predecessor. The problems before us are colossal, but we shall face them with good heart and with confidence in ourselves.

13. Among these problems is that of the refugees or displaced persons. There has often been criticism in the past of what we have done or not done. We have made many mistakes, but I am sure that our record of achievement in regard to rehabilitation is very noteworthy. But while we were attempting to solve the main refugee problem in northern and north-western India, an equally big problem arose in Bengal. This problem was somewhat different from that of the refugees from West Pakistan. While the old problem was gradually being solved, and townships and work centres and shops and houses were growing up there, we had to tackle the Bengal problem from the very beginning. Naturally we profited from our previous experience and did not make so many mistakes. It requires, however, careful and to some extent, separate handling. I am requesting Shri Mohanlal Saksena to spend some weeks in Bengal and Assam to examine this problem in all its aspects and to report to me. After that, I hope that we shall devise some effective method of dealing with it. Meanwhile, our officers there and the West Bengal and Assam Governments are helping in every way.

14. The implementation of the Indo-Pakistan Agreement has, to a considerable extent, continued. Although the exodus has continued on both sides, there are indications of a substantial movement in the reverse direction. The exodus of the Muslims from the U.P. and Rajasthan actually increased and the Pakistan Government announced that they would close their Sind border.[6] But there has been a marked lessening now

6. On 21 May, the Pakistan Government decided to withdraw, from 27 May, special transport facilities across the Sind-Jodhpur border, thereby virtually sealing its border with India.

in this exodus. In Assam, there is no marked exodus now in either direction. In West Bengal, however, about 8,000 Hindus still come from East Bengal and about 5,000 Hindus go back daily to East Bengal.

15. What is disturbing is not so much this exodus, which I think will gradually stabilize itself, but rather a number of incidents of dacoity and abduction that are reported from East Bengal. Partly this may be due to a general breakdown of the social and administrative machine. Nevertheless, it is disquieting. On the other side in Calcutta, the tone of the press has been far from satisfactory and this produces bad results. This problem of dealing with the press has become a very difficult and urgent one. Recently, the Supreme Court put aside some orders that had been issued in regard to a very virulent communalist organ in Delhi and a Communist paper in Bombay.[7] The influence of the press is considerable and if that influence is exercised in a wrong direction, it does great harm. In Calcutta, it is exceedingly unfortunate that old, established and respected newspapers should lose all sense of responsibility.

16. As I wrote to you in a previous letter, the issue before us is a very clear one. It is not primarily whether the Indo-Pakistan Agreement is fully implemented or not, or whether it succeeds fully or not, although we want that to happen. The issue is whether we as a country, as a Government, and as a Party, are going to adhere to old Congress principles in regard to communalism or whether we are going to drift away from them. It seems that some Congressmen and some newspapers which are normally considered Congress newspapers, have drifted far in the other direction. They have forgotten everything that we have stood for and have reacted to what has happened in Pakistan by behaving in the same manner. That way lies danger for India and we must resist it with all our

7. On 26 May, the Supreme Court quashed the precensorship order on *Organiser*, an English weekly published from New Delhi, and declared illegal the ban imposed by the Madras Government on entry into Madras of the Bombay weekly, *Cross Roads*.

strength. I am convinced of this more than of anything else that if we are to prosper and progress in India, we must adhere to the old Congress policy and prevent the spread of the communal spirit in India.

17. Generally speaking, it may be accepted that the majority communities in India or Pakistan are ultimately responsible. It is no good blaming the Hindu in Pakistan or the Muslim in India for being communal. He reacts to the living conditions he finds and if those conditions become too hard and unbearable, he migrates. That very migration means that the majority community and the Government of that country have failed to that extent.

18. I do not understand the mentality of those who are continually talking in a defeatist strain and prophesying failure of the Indo-Pak Agreement.[8] Indeed, they seem to look forward to this and work for it. What result they aim at I cannot imagine, because any result will then be bad for us and bad for others. It is time that all of us pulled ourselves together and thought a little clearly of the present and of the future. It is time we stood up four-square against every attempt to promote the spread of the poison of communalism in this country. There can be no half-way house in the choice of these policies and our attitude must be clear and definite.

19. You will have heard that the Kashmir question has advanced a stage further by the arrival of Sir Owen Dixon, the U.N. mediator, in India. He is an eminent Australian judge and there can be little doubt about his open-minded approach to this problem. But nevertheless, the problem is not an easy one to solve and so far as we are concerned, we have stated our position quite clearly and there is not much room for changing

8. For example, on 27 May, Syama Prasad Mookerjee contended that the Nehru-Liaquat Pact had done the greatest harm to the people of Bengal and asserted that "not a single refugee was willing to go back to East Bengal as the Delhi Agreement had not at all succeeded in restoring confidence."

it. It must always be remembered that the Kashmir issue is affected by events in India. If communalism and the communal spirit increase in India, an adverse effect is produced in Kashmir. Ultimately, it is clear that the future of Kashmir depends upon the people of Kashmir.

20. In regard to our other major disputes with Pakistan, we are proceeding rather slowly. These are the canal waters dispute[9] and the evacuee property laws and the permit system. Some of these have got entangled with the question of the exchange ratio between Indian and Pakistan rupee.

21. The Prime Minister of Pakistan has finished his tour of America. I am sorry to say that his activities there and his speeches have not been in keeping with a friendly attitude to India.[10] He has often spoken in disparaging terms of India and has asked for more and more arms and ammunition, presumably to be used against India, if need arises. The recent big explosion in the U.S. of arms being conveyed to Pakistan was a significant pointer.[11]

22. As you know, there has been a long-standing and bitter dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan.[12] Our relations with Afghanistan have been very good and there is no reason why we should fall out. An attempt has been made by various countries, including some Great Powers, to bring pressure on Afghanistan to surrender their claims and to fall in line with

9. The discussions between the two Governments at Delhi from 29 to 31 May on the canal waters ended inconclusively.

10. On 19 May 1950, Liaquat Ali Khan said at Los Angeles that for two years India had stalled holding a plebiscite in Kashmir because it was a foregone conclusion that if a fair vote was taken the overwhelming majority would vote for joining Pakistan. On 22 May, at Houston, he reiterated that there could be no friendship with India unless the Kashmir problem was solved.

11. On 19 May 1950, munitions bound for Pakistan exploded in South Amboy (New Jersey) killing 30 persons.

12. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, pp. 316, 327-328.

Pakistan. Without going into the merits of this question, we felt that it was unfair for these countries to bring this pressure on Afghanistan and we have not associated ourselves with it. We have kept aloof and not identified ourselves with any policy in regard to this dispute.

23. In China, our Ambassador has presented his credentials[13] to the President[14] of the Republic and mutual complimentary speeches were made. Apart from these speeches, many private interviews took place and, our Ambassador reports, that the general feeling in China is one of great friendship with India and a desire to develop closer relations. We have welcomed this, as friendly relations between India and China can go a long way towards the maintenance of peace in Asia.

24. On the international stage the old questions continue to give trouble and no solution is found for them. There does not appear to be any danger of war, but the situation deteriorates and passions arise. Our policy, as you know, is to keep cool even though others get excited and not to align ourselves with any bloc. We shall continue that policy.

25. Recently our representatives attended the Sydney conference[15] and a conference in the Philippines.[16] Both were supposed to consider economic and like matters relating to South East Asia with a view to the development of this region. Both conferences dealt, rather vaguely, with these subjects and no immediate picture of co-ordinated help has appeared. We

13. On 20 May 1950.

14. Mao Zedong (Tse-tung) (1893-1976). President, first Chinese Peasants Union, 1927; led the 'Long March', 1934-36; Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, 1935-76; proclaimed the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949; Chairman of the People's Republic of China, 1949-59.

15. See *ante*, p. 100.

16. The conference from 26 to 30 May 1950, attended by the representatives of Australia, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Thailand, was convened by President Quirino of the Philippines to discuss cultural, economic and political matters.

attended both these conferences, but we made it clear that we were not joining any group hostile to another group.[17]

26. In South Africa, while we were waiting for a round table conference, the Union Government has been proceeding with further anti-Indian legislation.[18] We pointed out to the South African Government that this was not in keeping with the round table approach and we suggested that the legislation should be postponed at least and further that no action should be taken to penalize Indians there meanwhile. Their answer has been disappointing and they continue to expedite the passage of this legislation. It is clear that we cannot participate in any round table conference, if the South African Union Government enacts these new laws in the near future. We are watching developments.

27. I have written to you separately about the working of the evacuee property ordinance and the permit system as between India and Western Pakistan.[19] I would like to draw your special attention to this matter. I have requested the new Minister of Rehabilitation to examine this carefully. I have myself seen many cases where injustice has been done and widespread alarm created by the actions of Custodians and others. I think we shall have to revise our procedure and even our personnel, where this is not satisfactory. At present, the whole approach seems to me to be misconceived.

28. The possibility of promoting trade between India and Turkey has been examined by our Commerce Ministry and the Turkish Embassy in New Delhi.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

17. This was clarified by the Indian delegate following the declaration of President Quirino that one of the objectives of the conference was to formulate ways and means to avert the tide of "totalitarian subversion" in Asia.

18. See *ante*, p. 86.

19. See *ante*, item, 15.

18

New Delhi
2 July, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to you after more than a month's interval. Owing to my absence from India, there was no letter to you in the middle of June. I have much to tell you about my travels in Indonesia, Malaya and Burma, but I must begin with the grave international crisis that has arisen in Korea.[1]

2. You know that we have decided to accept the resolution of the U.N. Security Council calling upon its members to help South Korea.[2] This decision was by no means a simple one and we had to give a great deal of thought to it. Our natural inclination, because of our foreign policy which we have reiterated so often, was to keep out of these troubles and certainly not to undertake any kind of responsibility. This general inclination was supported by some other facts. While North Korea has been a full-fledged Communist State,[3] South

1. On 25 June 1950, the forces of North and South Korea clashed all along the 38th parallel.

2. The resolution of 25 June called for immediate cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of North Korean forces to the 38th parallel, and urged the member states to render every assistance to the U.N. in the execution of the resolution and refrain from assisting the North Koreans. The resolution of 27 June called upon the U.N. member states to furnish assistance to South Korea "to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security."

3. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was proclaimed on 12 September 1948 with Kim Il-Sung as its Premier.

Korea has been far from a modern or democratic State.[4] We had recognized neither of these two Governments, although indirectly we were connected much more with South Korea. For some time past an Indian representative[5] has been on the U.N. Korea Commission,[6] which functioned entirely in South Korea, because the North would have nothing to do with it. Indeed, the first Korea Commission had an Indian for its Chairman.[7] Nevertheless, it has been our desire to keep out of the Korean conflict and we did not approve of much that was done in both North and South Korea.[8]

3. Another complication and difficulty that arose was the mixing up by President Truman[9] of Formosa, Indo-China and

4. The Republic of Korea was proclaimed in South Korea on 15 August 1948 with Syngman Rhee as its President. In 1949, the Government debarred a number of members of the National Assembly, and fearing Communist subversion, arrested many in the army, civil services, educational institutions and the judiciary under the National Democratic Law promulgated on 1 December 1948.

5. Anup Singh (1903-1969). Secretary, National Committee for India's Freedom, U.S.A., 1943-46; India's chief delegate to U.N. Commission on Korea, 1949-50; Member, Rajya Sabha, 1952-60 and 1962-69.

6. The United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) was set up on 14 November 1947 to organize elections to the Korean National Assembly leading to the formation of the National Government. The elections were, however, held only in South Korea as the North Korean Government refused to co-operate with the U.N. Commission.

7. K.P.S. Menon (1898-1982). Joined Indian Civil Service, 1921; later seconded to Indian Political Service; Agent-General to China, 1943-47; Ambassador to China, 1947; Chairman, United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, 1948; Foreign Secretary, 1948-52; Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1952-61.

8. The Indian representative on the U.N. Commission protested against South Korea's refusal to seek the co-operation of North Korea which could have paved the way towards the unification of Korea through a process of conciliation. India refused to recognize the South Korean Government as a duly elected National Government as envisaged under the U.N. resolution of 14 November 1947. The North Korean refusal to co-operate with the U.N. Commission was also criticized.

9. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 111.

the Philippines with the Korean issue.[10] We have nothing to do with the Philippines, but our policy in regard to China and Indo-China has been a clear and definite one and it has not been in line with the U.S.A. policy. Hence the mixing up of these issues with that of Korea was embarrassing in the extreme. We have no desire whatever to side with either group in Indo-China. With the People's Government in China, we are beginning to develop some kind of friendly relations and we want this process to continue. We do not want to behave as if we were the enemies of this new China.

4. All these were reasons for us to keep aloof from the Korean struggle. On the other hand, as members of the Security Council, we could not remain silent and we had to come to some decision and declare it. It seemed to us that there could be no doubt that the North Korean Government had committed aggression on a large scale on South Korea. We do not know what had happened previous to this. There had been many border clashes and it is quite possible that South Korea's record was not too good. But there can be little comparison between those border affrays and this major, well-planned invasion of South Korea. Thus aggression had taken place and to surrender to it was wrong and would have meant the collapse of the United Nations structure as well as led to other dangerous consequences. The first resolution of the Security Council [11] declared that there had been this aggression. Our representative [12] voted for it. To some extent it followed logically that something in the nature of the second resolution should be passed later. Normally, therefore, there would have

10. Announcing American air and naval support to the South Korean troops on 27 June, Truman ordered strengthening of the U.S. forces in Philippines, increased military assistance to the French forces and the associated states in Indo-China and directed the U.S. Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack on Taiwan.

11. On 25 June 1950.

12. Sir B.N. Rau (1887-1953). Joined Indian Civil Service, 1910; adviser to the Constituent Assembly, 1947-49; India's permanent representative at the United Nations, 1949-52; judge of the International Court of Justice, 1952-53.

been no particular difficulty, in theory at least, in our giving immediate support to the second resolution. But, in practice, there were obvious dangers and difficulties and there were certain complications also to which I have referred above. The matter was too serious to be decided on the spot at Lake Success by our representative and we instructed him, therefore, not to take any further step without special reference to us. This was before the second resolution had been proposed. This second resolution was brought forward in a hurry and little time was given for consultation with Governments. So when it came up before the Security Council, our representative could only say that he was waiting for instructions from his Government and could not participate in the voting till such instructions came. An attempt was made to telephone to me, but it failed. Even if it had succeeded, the only answer I could have given was that we would consider the matter carefully. In spite of the urgency of the matter, it was essential that we should give it the most careful consideration and we could not allow ourselves to be hustled into a decision.

5. Our Cabinet gave it careful consideration and, as you know, came to the decision to accept the second resolution.[13] I think that logically or practically, there was no other course open to us. In our resolution of acceptance, however, we tried to make it perfectly clear that this did not involve any departure from our foreign policy of keeping aloof from rival and hostile groups of nations. It is true that it is not an easy matter to follow that policy when, to some extent, we do line up with a certain group. Nevertheless, there is a difference and we have tried to emphasize that. We have accepted a certain position which the U.N. took up, because we thought that there had been aggression and this aggression should be met. More than that, we were not prepared to do. We intend to maintain this

13. Rau stated on 29 June 1950 that India's acceptance of the Security Council resolution calling for assistance to South Korea did not involve any modification of her foreign policy and the Government of India hoped that even at this stage it might be possible to put an end to the fighting and to settle the dispute by mediation.

distinction throughout. We do not wish to get entangled in the Formosa affair or in Indo-China.

6. As a consequence of our decision, the Secretary-General[14] of the United Nations has asked us, as well as other countries, what active help we can give. In our reply, we have pointed out that we are not in a position to give any active military, naval or air help. Our defence apparatus is meant for home defence only and is not built up for activities in distant theatres of war. We do not keep expeditionary forces, nor do we have aircraft or naval vessels to spare for this purpose. Financially we are in a hard position and cannot afford distant adventures.

7. There is another reason which I should like to mention to you. If we supplied any active help of the kind demanded, in existing circumstances, it might have got us involved in the other activities which the U.S.A. have undertaken on themselves, that is, Formosa, etc. We were not prepared for this. Thus we have pointed out to the Secretary-General of the United Nations that we cannot supply this type of help. What we might have given at the most would have been some token help of little real and practical consequences, but, nevertheless, meaning a heavy burden on us and involving us in many complications.

8. That is our present position and we hope to adhere to it. Lest it be thought that we have given an empty promise by our accepting the U.N. resolution and doing nothing else, I should like to say that our acceptance of that resolution itself is of great help to the United Nations. Perhaps there is hardly any other country, barring one or two, whose moral help is, in these circumstances, of the value and significance of India's. I think the world recognizes this.

9. The situation is a difficult and dangerous one and is changing from day to day. Some people think that this is the

14. Trygve Lie. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 130.

beginning of the much dreaded World War III. Others hope that war-like operations may be limited to the Korean region. I do not know what is going to happen. But there is undoubtedly a danger of the gravest kind. The least we can do is to try to avoid the type of hysteria which often prevails in countries when war comes or is threatened. We must keep cool and judge each issue as it arises, as dispassionately as possible, keeping in view our basic policy and our ideals. This is going to be a testing time for all nations and peoples, and it is likely to affect, directly or indirectly, most of our other activities. It may be that we are on the verge of a crisis that may change the future of the world, and such a crisis tests the inner strength of the people. Our normal politics and conflicts become unimportant when these great issues come up before us. We must, therefore, develop the right perspective, clarity of mind and the equilibrium of the spirit, in order to deal adequately with the problems that will encompass us in the days to come.

10. India has special and rather intimate connections with Burma and Indonesia, and my recent tour[15] has underlined these relationships. In coming to our decision about Korea, we had to keep these relationships in mind. Our responsibility, therefore, was even greater than it might appear. Burma and Indonesia, not being in the United Nations Security Council, were not immediately called upon to make a particular decision. Indonesia has now declared that it will keep away from the Korean conflict.[16] (Indonesia is not yet a member of the United Nations). Burma has a frontier with China and is trying to develop more intimate relations with that country. Both these countries have special difficulties and one can understand their desire to avoid getting entangled in fresh conflicts.

15. See *ante*, p. 101.

16. The Indonesian Government declared on 27 June 1950 that "it would be premature and useless" for them to give an opinion on the Korean question and take up a position. Their most urgent task was to cope with domestic problems.

11. What chances there are of preventing the spread of this Korean war, it is difficult to gauge. There are not many. But undoubtedly there are some such chances, and thus far, the U.S.S.R. has not said or done anything which might worsen the crisis. China has naturally expressed her resentment over the American declaration in regard to Formosa.[17]

12. If there is a possibility of resolving this conflict, it can only be done, we feel, by bringing in the People's Republic of China into the United Nations. We have been trying to do so for some time and have pressed our viewpoint on other countries with some success. We propose to continue our efforts to this end. If the new China comes into the United Nations and the Security Council, then the U.S.S.R. will come back to them also and the internal disruption of the United Nations will be prevented. If the United Nations goes, then there is no other way left for maintaining world peace. The United Nations have been much criticized, and often justly criticized, but nevertheless they have performed an essential function in the maintenance of peace. Their continuance therefore seems essential. This was one of the reasons which induced us to support the United Nations decision to try to halt the aggression of North Korea.

13. My recent travels in South East Asia, just on the eve of these grave developments in Korea, have enabled me to understand the problems of the countries I visited a little better than I did previously. They have brought about greater mutual understanding, and I hope, respect. It is fortunate that I was able to pay these visits before all of us got entangled in other

17. On 28 June, Mao Zedong declared that "the U.S. aggression in Asia will arouse the extensive and resolute resistance of the Asian people." He accused Truman of "tearing to shreds all international agreements regarding non-intervention by the U.S.A. in China's internal affairs." On the same day, Zhou En-lai also asserted that "No matter what obstructive action the American imperialists may take, Formosa is part of China and will remain so for ever... the people of our country will fight for the liberation of Formosa from the grasp of the American aggressors."

major developments. For me, this recent tour has brought many unforgettable impressions. I was received in Indonesia with a friendliness which made me feel completely at home there. I was not a stranger but a companion and a comrade in common tasks and undertakings. Indonesia has to face very difficult problems. But I found a spirit of vitality there, which promised success in overcoming any difficulties that might arise. The country is beautiful in a peculiarly attractive way and the people there are extraordinarily likable. The island of Bali is famous for many things and it lived up to its reputation. There is an enchantment about it which affected me all the more because of its living culture, derived so much from India in the distant past. I have never come across a more artistic people than the people of Bali. Artistry was at the tips of their fingers and in the toes of their feet. Every man and woman and child seemed to be born with this sense of beauty and grace. They danced and sang and painted and carved on a mass scale. All these were folk arts and not the privilege of a few. Most of their dancing and their folk plays were derived from the stories of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. There was harmony between these people and the nature that surrounded them, which is so lacking in other countries. Some kind of harmony is also found among primitive people, but the Balinese as well as other Indonesians were very far from being primitive. They had a background of ancient and highly developed civilizations, intimately connected with India. So I came back from Indonesia powerfully impressed with what I saw and emotionally moved, and I have a certain nostalgic feeling when I think again of these places. We live in a world not only of hatred and violence, but also of vulgarity and lack of many of the qualities that have made life worth living. Grace and charm and culture and the restraints of civilization fade away, even though we shout so much about culture and the progress that civilization has made. So I felt as if I was in a haven of refuge from this ever-growing vulgarity, when I was in the island of Bali. A fear seizes me : will Bali retain this grace and charm and inner culture in spite of the advent of the tourists who will bring so-called modern civilization in their train?

14. In Burma I found that the situation had greatly improved during the past six months. It was still difficult, but it might be said that the Government was in definite control and the law and order situation was largely in hand. The Prime Minister, Thakin Nu, continues to be the dominating personality by sheer force of character. He is a man of the highest integrity and it is the good fortune of Burma to have him at the head of her affairs. Certain difficulties have arisen on the Burma-China border, because some Kuomintang forces, pushed out from China, entered Burma. Normally such forces should have been disarmed and interned. But they have been troublesome and have not at all behaved well towards the Burmese Government.

15. In Malaya, the situation is a very peculiar one, because nearly half the population is Chinese. There is not much friendly feeling or confidence between the Malayans and the Chinese. The Indians there, who form the third largest group (13% of the population) are on the whole on friendly terms with the other people there. It is not an easy matter to evolve a united nation out of these differing elements. Meanwhile, certain terrorist groups, who are often styled Communists, though they include many others who are just anti-social, have been carrying on an incessant warfare. There has been a great deal of cruelty in this warfare and senseless acts of terrorism. The Colonial Government has proclaimed a state of emergency which greatly limits the freedom of the people.[18] I do not myself see how that Government or any other Government can avoid the challenge of the terrorist groups. They have to meet it, as any Government would. But I did feel that any real solution of the problem must be based on political and economic approaches. An attempt is being made in Malaya to develop a common nationality for the Malayans, Chinese and Indians. If this attempt succeeds, it will go some way to bring about that sense of unity in a nation which is so essential for freedom.

18. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. I, pp. 143 and 180.

16. On my return from my tour in South East Asia, I came to Calcutta and spent two days there.[19] Immediately I was wrapped up in the problem of East and West Bengal. I found some things to my liking and some things which I disliked greatly. The question was often asked as to whether the Indo-Pakistan Agreement of April 8th had succeeded or failed. That question seemed to me largely irrelevant. That Agreement was not a final solution of Indo-Pakistan problems, nor was it indeed a solution of the Bengal problem. It was a big step first in averting catastrophe and, secondly, in producing a favourable atmosphere for the solution of other problems. In both these respects that Agreement succeeded in a large measure. There is no doubt that it did avert catastrophe and there is also no doubt that it created a far better atmosphere than we had had for a long time. It gave immediate relief to millions of members of minority communities in both countries; it gave an opportunity to large numbers to migrate in safety and with their movable property. In Western Pakistan and in large parts of India, it brought about a very great easing of tension and the common people on both sides felt happier, as when a great burden is removed. The vast refugee populations in India and Pakistan (for the moment leaving out the Bengals and Assam) also felt relieved and could hope for an adequate settlement of their problems.

17. These were no small gains. And yet it is true that in East Bengal members of the minority community are still full of apprehension and there is little sense of security. No major incidents occur, as they did previously, that is, there is no mass trouble. But individual instances occur fairly frequently. Dacoity is rampant. This may, of course, be due partly to economic causes. But then this dacoity usually takes place in Hindu houses and even in the houses of poor Hindus. Also, it is accompanied sometimes by molestation of women and abduction. Clearly this is something much more than the usual dacoity. Such instances produce a feeling of fear and insecurity

19. On 24 and 25 June 1950.

in the minds of the minority. Probably things are improving even in regard to such matters, but the process is slow. In West Bengal, such incidents do not normally occur now and, on the whole, the minority is slightly better off. But it would be an exaggeration to say that the Muslim minority in West Bengal has a full sense of security and has no grievances. In the U.P., the Muslim migration has stopped completely and many Muslims are coming back from Pakistan. Conditions may be said to be more or less normal in the U.P. and adjoining areas.

18. The figures of migrations in the two Bengals and in Assam are still formidable. Everyday brings its large quota of migrants. On the other hand, a fairly considerable number of old migrants go back daily. Roughly speaking, 2,000 to 2,500 Hindus come out from East Pakistan daily in excess of those who go back. Many of the Hindus who go back to East Bengal return with such movable property as they can bring with them.

19. The two Central Ministers for Bengal and Assam, Shri C.C. Biswas and Dr. Malik, have carried out extensive tours especially in East Bengal, and their visits have done good. I am happy that these two Ministers are working together with considerable success. Generally speaking, Governments have earnestly tried to fulfil the terms of the Indo-Pakistan Agreement, that is, both the Central Governments and the Provincial Governments in India and Pakistan. The lower officials in East Bengal, however, have not always done what they should; some of the lower officials in West Bengal also have not come up to the mark. The press of Pakistan has shown considerable discipline and sobriety ever since the Agreement. Many of the newspapers in West Bengal, however, have consistently attacked the Agreement and have continued to give stories of refugees which excite the public. I have been troubled both by the attitude of the Calcutta press and by the activities of some communal leaders in West Bengal. I am happy to say, however, that quite recently, the press in Calcutta has accepted certain rules or code of conduct which



At the National Chemical Laboratory,
Pune, 3 January 1950



Signing the Constitution of India,
New Delhi, 24 January 1950



With the President and members of the Union Cabinet,
New Delhi, 31 January 1950



At the training centre,
Nilokheri, 22 February 1950



Signing the Indo-Pakistan Agreement,
New Delhi, 8 April 1950



In the cabin of a steam locomotive,
April 1950

have been agreed upon previously by the newspaper organizations of both sides. This is a happy augury and I am sure it will produce good results.

20. There have been a number of visits of goodwill missions between India and Pakistan. They have generally met with a cordial welcome on the other side. One of such missions was led by Shri Bhimsen Sachar [20] to West Pakistan.[21] This travelled about all over West Punjab and Sind and met with an extraordinarily friendly reception everywhere. This showed that, given the chance, the people want to show their friendliness. They are tired of the conflict and the preaching of bitterness and hatred.

21. There have recently been talks in Delhi on the subject of evacuee property.[22] They have resulted in some success and a full Agreement [23] has been arrived at in regard to movable property. Regarding immovable property, no decision has been reached, but I think it is right to say that considerable progress has been made.

22. One matter to which I attach great importance is the evacuation of mosques, temples and *gurdwaras* by refugees and others, who may have taken possession of them either in India or in Pakistan, and the handing over of these buildings to people of that religion who can look after them properly. A good deal was done in Delhi in regard to mosques here, but I believe

20. (1893-1978). Congressman from Punjab; Finance Minister in the Coalition Government in undivided Punjab, 1946-47; Chief Minister, Punjab, 1949 and 1952-56; Governor of Orissa, 1956-57 and Andhra Pradesh, 1959-62; High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, 1964-66.

21. The goodwill mission from 4 June 1950 for two weeks was sponsored by the central *phir basar* (rehabilitation) committee.

22. 27 and 28 June 1950.

23. The Agreement of 28 June 1950 laid down the general principles of removal, sale or disposal of movable property by displaced persons without formal permission from the custodian. Facilities were also to be extended for the transfer of bank deposits, shares and insurance policies.

many mosques still remain in the possession of Hindus or Sikhs in the Punjab or elsewhere. So also many temples and *gurdwaras* remain in the possession of Muslims in Pakistan, West and East. I think we should concentrate on all these religious edifices and free them from this kind of forcible occupation. This has both a practical importance and a great sentimental significance.

23. *The problem of minorities* in Pakistan or in India has many aspects. But the most important one is the psychological aspect. In each country, conditions have to be created to produce a sense of absolute security in the minds of the minority. Government can do much. Officials can do a great deal and the public at large, of course, can make or mar any programme. But above everything, we must try to increase the morale of the minorities. Unless they have that morale, even external protection will do little good. In East Bengal, for some time past and today, the most unfortunate feature is the utter demoralization of the Hindus. It should be our first task therefore to attack this sense of helplessness and fear and try to make the minorities everywhere more self-reliant. The press can do a great deal in this respect. Reciting long tales of woe, even though they are true, and always pointing out the helplessness of the people concerned, has the effect of demoralizing still further. A different psychological approach is necessary. It is no good at all for the Muslims in Pakistan to preach homilies to the Hindus; it is equally no good for the Hindus in India to preach homilies to the Muslims. It is by the behaviour of the majority community and not by its sermons that it will be judged, and ultimately, the test is the reaction to that behaviour in the minority community. The whole future of our country as of Pakistan depends upon this growth of morale. Masses of frightened and demoralized refugees can do little good to themselves or to the country they go.

24. In my previous letter, I have drawn your attention to the desirability of relaxing and liberalizing the working of the permit system between India and West Pakistan. Also to a very

liberal interpretation of the evacuee property laws. Instances continue to come before me of harsh and unfair treatment of individuals. I hope that it may be possible to do away with this abnormal legislation regarding evacuee properties. Meanwhile, we should tone it down and liberalize it in working.

25. I have referred above to the new regime in China. It may interest you to read some secret telegrams that we have received from our Ambassador in Peking. In these telegrams he has given some information about the various policies that the Chinese Government is following now. I am, therefore, enclosing copies of these telegrams, which should be treated as secret.[24] You will notice that the Government of China is gradually changing its policy somewhat away from many things that can be called the socialist economy. It is interesting, for instance, to note what the President of China, Mao Tse-tung, who is also the leading Communist there, says : "The idea of some people who think it possible to bring about an early elimination of capitalism and introduce socialism is wrong and unsuitable to the conditions of our country."[25]

26. As you know, I travelled from Cochin to Djakarta on board our cruiser, I.N.S. *Delhi*. This gave me an opportunity of meeting many hundreds of our naval boys and I was very happy to come into more intimate contact with them. They were a fine lot of young men, drawn from all parts of the country, efficient, co-operative and cheerful. Mixing with them for a few days gave me a new confidence in the youth of my country.

24. K.M. Panikkar thought that China was engrossed with her internal problems and had no desire to follow an aggressive policy beyond her own frontiers. He also believed that the Chinese leadership stood for friendship with India, and would respect the autonomy of Tibet. As for the economic programme, he thought the new Government, contrary to Mao's earlier declaration, did not intend to confiscate large estates.

25. Mao's written report to the Third Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, 6 June 1950.

27. While I was on board I.N.S. *Delhi*, on my way to Djakarta, I received a wireless message containing the long statement that Dr. Matthai had issued in regard to his resignation.[26] This was done in answer to some remarks I had made in a speech at Trivandrum.[27] I must confess that I read the statement with great distress. Apart from the personal element[28] and apart from the fact that there were incorrect statements in it, it seemed to me an act of grave impropriety for an ex-Minister to speak in this way. We are trying to build up conventions of public behaviour. We are still new to them and it takes time to build any such convention. For a man who had occupied so respected a position as Dr. John Matthai, to issue a statement of this kind, was to do grave injury to those conventions and give a chance to others to behave in this manner.

28. Dr. Matthai dealt with some vital national problems and I felt that it was necessary, in the public interest, that I should reply to him publicly. I decided, however, to wait till I returned from my tour. Meanwhile, Maulana Azad had said something

26. On 2 June 1950, Matthai in his second statement, expressed his "grave misgivings" about the Indo-Pakistan Agreement. He criticized the setting up of the Planning Commission which might become a "parallel cabinet" and complained that as Finance Minister he had to work under serious constraints in his exercise of control of expenditure.

27. Nehru had said on 1 June 1950 that he and Matthai differed mainly in their approach to the question of planned development. While Matthai favoured mobilization of the resources before setting up of the Planning Commission, he was convinced that initiation of the process of planning within an institutional framework could not wait.

28. Matthai had alleged on 2 June, that Nehru himself supported the cause of many ministers indulging in unnecessary expenditure which according to him had a demoralizing effect all round and made the position of the Finance Minister "unnecessarily difficult."

in reply[29] and had corrected some statements that Dr. Matthai had made. On my return here, I gave fuller consideration to this matter and consulted some of my colleagues. On their advice, I gave up the idea of carrying on this controversy in public. If Parliament or our Party in Parliament desires me to make a statement to them, I shall then do so. Meanwhile, I have decided not to issue any public statement. I might add, however, that I have corresponded with Dr. Matthai on this subject.[29]

29. Dr. Matthai's statement is said to have been provoked by what I said at Trivandrum. I made a few remarks there because many questions were put to me regarding Dr. Matthai's first statement,[30] in which he had said that there were vital differences of policy between him and me. People naturally asked what these differences were and sometimes they made wild guesses. A rumour spread that we had differed on the question of the exchange value of the rupee. This was completely untrue. I felt that these rumours and speculations would do harm and something should be said. So I referred to Dr. Matthai's first statement and, in an exceedingly friendly language, said that he had differed from me and from others in the Cabinet in regard to the Planning Commission. I added that there was much in what Dr. Matthai said, but, nevertheless, we thought it essential, even in existing circumstances, to have the Planning Commission. I do not think I used a single word that was wrong or unfriendly.

30. Dr. Matthai's second statement was a bitter personal attack on me and referred to three matters specially. There was

29 On 3 June 1950, Maulana Azad repudiated Matthai's charge that he was checked in his efforts to effect economy in government expenditure for want of adequate support from the Prime Minister and his other colleagues in the Cabinet. Azad was also surprised at Matthai's criticism of the Agreement with Pakistan as at every discussion Matthai had expressed full support for a policy of agreement and conciliation with Pakistan. As for the setting up of the Planning Commission, Azad did not think the country could afford "to wait for better times."

30. On 31 May 1950.

this Planning Commission, which he criticized very strongly and in regard to which he made certain statements about their status, etc., which were not correct. There is no question of the Planning Commission being a rival to the Cabinet. It is a purely advisory body of experts. It is a great advantage to me, as Prime Minister, and to the Cabinet, to have these experts to consult, whenever necessity arises. Indeed, most Governments have Planning Commissions of some kind or other. It was unfortunate that Dr. Matthai did not like the idea of a Planning Commission, but that was the firm policy not only of the Congress but of our Government, repeatedly declared in the Legislature. Personally I was entirely committed to it and believe in it and I could not possibly give it up. After much consideration the Cabinet accepted it, and in fact it was Dr. Matthai who made the announcement in his budget speech.[31]

31. The second point which Dr. Matthai raised was his disagreement with the Indo-Pakistan Pact. He did this in language which surprised me greatly. I need not discuss this matter here, because that has been one of the corner-stones of our recent policy.

32. Thirdly, he referred to the extravagance of some Ministries under me. This again surprised me, because I had done my utmost to encourage economy. I have gone into this matter since my return and I find that the charge Dr. Matthai made had little substance.

33. I have thought it fit to mention this matter briefly in this letter, because I am not issuing any kind of public statement at present at least. The whole episode has been unsavoury and totally unbecoming to our public life.

34. You will be glad to know that the latest reports we have received on the food situation are definitely good, that is to say that the Grow-More-Food Campaign of last year has shown definite results. This was largely due to the co-operation of the

31. See *ante*, p. 45.

State Governments with this Campaign. The following figures will give you some idea of the progress made during the past three years :

Years	Target Achievement (Lakh tons)	Percentage
1947-48	9,096.86	75
1948-49	8,867.71	87
1949-50	9,859.35	95

Thus the achievement for the year is 95 per cent of the target laid down. It is indeed hoped that it will go up to 98 per cent. This progress has been specially in regard to the irrigation schemes. Progress has also been maintained in regard to wells. minor irrigation, tanks, land reclamation, and the use of manure and fertilizers. Thus the result of the first year's working of the Emergency Branch of the Food Ministry may be said to be definitely satisfactory, and it is reasonable to expect that this progress will be maintained and indeed that it will gather momentum. We may, therefore, look forward with some confidence to the achievement of the goal of self-sufficiency within two years.

35. There is one snag however. The reports of production received by us are not always accurate and are based on figures supplied by unintelligent *patwaris* and the like. We are checking this now and we hope to have more accurate figures later. I need hardly add that there is absolutely no room for any complacency and we have to work hard to fulfil our objective. But we can work now with a certain confidence that we shall make good.

36. There has been an improvement in the petrol supply position and Government are making a cautious approach towards the decontrol of petrol by lifting rationing in the port cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Cochin and in the States of Assam and Manipur from 1st July 1950. Paper has been

decontrolled.[32] In regard to sugar, it has been decided to import 1,00,000 tons in the course of the next year. This import of sugar will be timed so as to prevent an accumulation or scarcity. The question of removal of control on the price and distribution of sugar will be considered in September 1950.

37. When I was away in Indonesia, Government made a slight variation in regard to their cotton policy. They have decided that for the 1950-51 crop the basic ceiling price will be raised by Rs. 150 per candy and an effective machinery working in close liaison with Government will be devised for collective purchase of cotton and for the maintenance of prices at reasonable levels subject to the ceiling. It is hoped indeed that the price will be kept low. In any event the new cotton crop will not come into the market before next year and there will, therefore, be no change in the prices of cloth during the next six months. The prices of cloth manufactured from the new cotton crop will be fixed, as usual, in accordance with the ruling prices of cotton. Our Minister of Industry and Supply hopes that there will be no rise in the price of cloth.

38. On the initiative of our Minister for Agriculture, the *Vana Mahotsava*, a national tree-planting week, is being celebrated and the Minister has put all his energy and enthusiasm into this work.[33] It has caught the imagination of the country and I am sure it will produce substantial results.

39. As the Government of the Union of South Africa have insisted on proceeding with and passing the Group Areas Bill in Parliament, the Government of India have informed the Union Government [34] that no useful purpose will be served now by holding the round table conference.[35] The conference was meant to consider existing disabilities from which South African nationals of Indian and Pakistani origin suffered.

32. This was announced on 23 June 1950.

33. Launched by the President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, on 1 July 1950.

34. On 1 July 1950.

35. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, pp. 346-347.

While we were hoping that existing conditions would be improved, the South African Government have actually added to the burdens and disabilities of the people of Indian origin in South Africa. This clearly indicated that the Union Government had no intention of reversing the process of discrimination which they had started some time ago and because of which we had appealed to the United Nations.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

19

New Delhi
15 July, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The international situation dominates the scene and we live from day to day on the verge of some fresh tragic development. Anything that may be written today may be somewhat out of date when this letter reaches you. Our Foreign Office has naturally to bear the chief burden of this situation, but the main lines of policy must necessarily be determined by the Cabinet and, finally, by Parliament. It is for this reason that we have thought it fit to summon Parliament for a special session to consider more particularly this international situation. It will meet on Monday, July 31st, and it is expected to sit for about two weeks. We shall take up such other urgent matters also as may be ready for consideration.

2. There have been many critics of the particular line we have taken up in regard to the Korean situation.[1] But I think it is true to say that there has been, by and large, general approval of that line in the country. In moments of crisis, when passions are roused, it is no easy matter to make decisions from day to day. It is not difficult to line up with one particular group or way of thinking and thus to leave major decisions to them. But

1. The United Socialist Organization on 30 June and the Socialist Party on 9 July 1950 regretted the Government's failure to adopt an attitude of neutrality or "a positive policy in the Korean development," as India's support of the resolution in the United Nations without the Soviet presence had reduced the resolution "to a farce" and turned the Assembly into a handmaid of the Anglo-American bloc.

if we have to make our own decisions, we have to rely on our own judgement and analysis of the situation, and to keep in view our basic objectives and the foreign policy we have been pursuing thus far.

3. Some words are used loosely, and among these, is "neutrality."[2] Neutrality in peace-time has no particular meaning. It is only in war that a country can be neutral. But even in so-called peace-time, ever since the last World War ended, we have lived in an atmosphere of war and expectation of war, and hence people talk of this or that country being neutral in the cold war. In reality, all that this means is that we have not given up the right to decide for ourselves as to what we should do and what we should not do in any particular set of circumstances. To give up that right to decide means to give up both our independence of judgement and independence of action. In other words, it means to give up our basic independence and become a satellite of some other country tied down to a policy which we may or may not like.

4. India has, within the inevitable limitations imposed by events, tried to follow her own independent policy in foreign, as in other affairs. No country can be hundred per cent independent in such matters because every act or policy flows from other acts done before and other things happening in the world. But within those limitations, one can be more or less independent. We have preferred to be more independent. That was not only an idealistic approach but, I think, an eminently practical way of dealing with current problems. Also it flowed naturally from our past. Any other policy would have come in the way of our natural development and stunted us, apart from creating a great deal of internal friction.

2. For example, the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* carried an article on 6 July, stating that the "Democracies will be greatly heartened to know that Pandit Nehru's India who had declared her policy of strict neutrality has decided to accept the Security Council's resolution calling for assistance to South Korea."

5. Foreign policy may and should depend upon certain ideals and objectives of a country. Inevitably, it is governed by the interests of that country. Enlightened self-interest may take a short view or a long view, and in foreign policy, more than anything else, the short view is dangerous. The speed of events today rather telescopes the short and the long views and therefore the long view becomes even more important. We have tried in India to avoid entanglement in foreign affairs because we are busy with our own problems. But it was a consequence of independence and of India's position in the world that we could not keep away from other problems. More especially, we are bound up by what happens in Asia. For sometime past, whether in America or Europe or South East Asia, I have been venturing to point out the importance of Asia in the world situation today.[3] That did not mean that any country of Asia had developed material or other kinds of power to influence world events. It meant that the change that had come over Asia by the progressive elimination of colonial control, and the nature of the problems that Asia had to face were of such vital importance, both in peace and war, as to affect the future of the world. The challenge and the conflict have come now in Korea. Korea may be relatively unimportant. It was called, in the old days, the Hermit Kingdom and then it became just a part of the Japanese Empire, struggling for freedom. But what is happening in Korea, it is apparent, affects the world. It may mean world war or it may mean our being for a long time on the verge of world war with all the tension and horror that this involves.

6. The critics of our policy have been of two kinds. Many of them have objected to our approving the U.N. Security Council's resolutions on Korea because that meant, according

3. For example, addressing the Indonesian Parliament on 7 June 1950, Nehru said, "Asia today is becoming perhaps the most important centre of various forces at play and in conflict. There has been a tendency in the past to ignore Asia as the outer fringe of the world. This is no longer the fact. If people do not realize that, they will realize it soon enough."

to them, an inevitable lining up with a certain group of Powers, notably the U.S.A. The other critics, on the other hand, have said that we have not fully supported the U.N. or the U.S.A. action in the Far East, that we have limited our support and conditioned it and have not jumped into the fray with our defence forces, etc. Thus we have failed to take advantage of any clear-cut policy and are likely to suffer disadvantages from either side.

7. It seems to me that both these criticisms are misconceived and do not take all the relevant facts into consideration. We have been following a certain policy in foreign affairs and that policy has undoubtedly brought credit to India and made us in a small way an influence for peace. If we and some other countries did not do so, undoubtedly war would have been much nearer, apart from the internal difficulties that we might have had to face. We have, in any event, to carry our people with us, and no policy, that has not got large-scale public approval, can be carried on for long. To have changed our old policy at the first touch of harsh fact may have brought approval from some quarters, but it would have been to the great discredit of India and she would have counted for little in the great drama that is taking place. So we tried to adhere to that basic policy, though there was a variation of it under stress of circumstances.

8. We face today a vast and powerful Soviet group of nations, which tends to become a monolithic bloc, not only pursuing a similar internal economic policy but a common foreign policy. That policy is an expansionist one and thus there is a tendency for it to come into conflict with others. It is expansionist not only in the normal political sense but also in encouraging internal trouble in other countries. That internal trouble would not go far, if economic conditions were more or less satisfactory. We do not like this expansionist policy, external or internal. At the same time, we realize that there are certain factors which help it and unless those internal factors are changed, we cannot effectively meet that challenge. On the other hand, the

approach of the rival group, though democratic in theory, tends more and more to encourage reactionary and military elements in various countries, especially of Asia. By the logic of events, it supports the relics of colonial rule. In the broad sweep of history, therefore, it becomes, whether it wants to or not, a defender of political and social systems which are out of date.

9. We want in India, and in other countries, democratic freedom for the nation and the individual and, at the same time, economic advance and social justice. Roughly speaking, the two governing ideas in the world today lay stress on one or the other of these. Ultimately, of course, there cannot be democratic freedom without social justice and there can be no social justice without democratic freedom. Is it possible for us in India to have both or try to have them? It is an ideal worth striving for and I am sure it is in line with the future development of the world, unless some great catastrophe overwhelms us all. Thus we have to follow a line which may not completely fit in with the two prevailing tendencies of the age, or rather which tries to harmonize between them.

10. In South Korea, we see that, in spite of a great deal of help given by the U.S.A., the political and social structure was excessively weak and it has cracked up. Indeed, from all accounts that we have had, South Korea was governed by as authoritarian a regime as North Korea, though both were entirely different. Numerous impartial observers have given us accounts of the bad state of affairs in South Korea during the past few months. So, it is difficult to be enthusiastic about South Korea. In Indo-China, we have kept apart from the two contending parties. One of these is supported by the French, and now the U.S.A. have promised military support to the French.[4] Formosa, by a decision taken during the later stages of

4. See *ante*, p. 120.

the War, was part of China.[5] But now obstructions have been placed in the way of Formosa going to China.[6]

11. All this indicates how a certain policy leads inevitably to the support of weak and reactionary elements in Asia. In the long run that policy cannot succeed because Asia, however weak, is wide awake and in a rebellious mood. It is, therefore, not a wise policy and in effect encourages those very elements to which it is opposed.

12. Europe and America are far too much used to thinking in terms of military or economic power. There is no doubt that we cannot ignore the force of arms or of money. But it has been repeatedly seen in parts of Asia that there are strict limitations to what arms and money can do, if they go against the prevailing mood of millions of people. India is in a position to understand these Asian problems much better, not only from the political but also from the psychological point of view, and India is also respected by these countries of Asia because we have no particular axe to grind. Therefore, a heavy responsibility rests upon us to adopt a policy which we consider not only expedient but wise and in keeping with the temper of Asia. To fall blindly in line with others, whoever they may be, is to fall into a trap and to miss the historic destiny of India. What the future holds, nobody can say. But we can at least try to do our best.

13. I have tried to explain in press conferences and elsewhere our present policy in regard to the conflict in the Far East.[7] We

5. By the Cairo declaration of 1943, it was agreed that all territories occupied by Japan since 1894 should be given up. This was formalized by the Potsdam agreement in 1945 by which Taiwan was to be returned to the Republic of China. After the Japanese surrender, the island was returned to the Nationalist Government to be administered by a provincial governor.

6. On 27 June 1950, Truman had declared that the determination of the legal status of Taiwan must await a peace treaty with Japan.

7. On 7 July 1950, Nehru clarified that India had supported the Security Council resolution because that was a logical step in the context of events, and because it seemed the only course open to avoid an extension of conflict and large-scale warfare. India's primary concern was to serve the cause of peace.

have given our moral support to the United Nations there and that is a great deal, as the world knows. It would have made a tremendous difference if we had withheld that support. But we have not sent any armed forces there and we do not intend to send them, so far as I can see. Of course, we are not in a position to send anything that might be called effective. But apart from that, we do not wish to get entangled in the larger conflicts which might arise there and which are threatened. Also we do not wish to lose our position of some vantage which might to utilized in the cause of peace. I realize that, in the circumstances prevailing today, India's capacity to influence them is strictly limited. Nevertheless, there is a possibility of making a difference and that difference may be between war and peace. Whether people like a particular policy we adopt or not, there is a growing respect for India and we force people and countries to think a little more clearly than they might otherwise do.

14. So far as Formosa is concerned, we cannot possibly join in any action against the People's Republic of China with whom we have friendly relations. So far as Indo-China is concerned, we cannot become the supporters of French colonial policy. We are still facing that policy in what is called French India. It is astonishing how short-sighted that is and what a lot of trouble it is giving us.

15. We have been in intimate touch with other Foreign Offices and I am glad to say that there has been much in common between our way of thinking and the U.K.'s approach to this Far Eastern problem, though they do not express themselves quite so clearly because of some of their commitments.[8] The vague talk about mediation has had no

8. Krishna Menon informed Delhi on 3 July that Attlee had said that "with him it was only a question of timing and that he had hoped that it would be possible to take the first step about China, but it now appeared a bad moment." Attlee agreed with Nehru that China and Russia should take their seats in the Security Council but blamed the Russians for the current stalemate.

substance.[9] But we have ventured to appeal to the Great Powers in the cause of peace.[10] We have felt that the only effective way out of the present deadlock is for the People's Republic of China to enter the Security Council of the United Nations. It has a right to do so, and to keep it out is completely illogical. If China comes in, then the U.S.S.R. also returns to the Security Council and in some ways the deadlock that has existed for some time past ends. We are not so foolish as to imagine that the problem is solved by that, and there may be a great deal of trouble in the Security Council. But it will be a different kind of trouble and should not lead to war. Of course, if some of the big Powers are bent on war, then they will have it. But the way we suggest does offer a method of resolving the deadlock without unnecessary loss of prestige of any party concerned. So we have pressed for the inclusion of China in the Security Council on the Powers concerned. There has been some little response,[11] but I am afraid it has not thus far been adequate.

16. Whatever the merits or demerits of our policy may be, it is certainly a clear one. And yet it is surprising how some people in foreign countries misunderstand it. A recent article[12] in the

9. *Reynold News* (London) and *Daily Compass* (New York) on 2 July 1950 called upon Nehru to play the role of a mediator. On 7 July 1950, Nehru, at a press conference, denied that India had initiated any move to offer mediation but added "Jawaharlal Nehru would go to the ends of the earth in search of peace but the invitation should be from the parties."

10. In his messages to Marshal Stalin and Dean Acheson on 13 July, Nehru stressed the need to admit the People's Republic of China to the United Nations and bring back the Soviet Union to the Security Council to facilitate the ending of the conflict as a step towards finding "a final solution to the Korean problem." Nehru also appealed to Attlee on 24 July to exert pressure on the United States to agree to the admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations.

11. Welcoming Nehru's peace initiative, Stalin wrote to him on 15 July that "for a speedy settlement of the Korean question it would be expedient to hear in the Security Council the representatives of the Korean people."

12. "An example of diplomacy at its best" by Arthur Krock printed on 4 July 1950.

New York Times stated that the U.S. Ambassador in Delhi [13] influenced us in adopting the line we did in approving of the U.N. resolution on Korea, and further that the American declaration in regard to Formosa, Indo-China and the Philippines helped us in doing so. As a matter of fact, our decision had nothing to do with the U.S. Ambassador's visit [14] and had been previously taken. The U.S. declaration about Formosa, etc.[15] actually came in our way and we thought it was most unfortunate, as I pointed out to the Ambassador. Any person, with some knowledge of the working of our minds or of the mental climate of Asia, would have realized this.

17. There is no need for us to become excited or hysterical because of the turn events have taken in the Far East. Indeed, this is just the time when we should be calm and collected and be prepared for every contingency. This means that we should try to lessen, as far as possible, our reliance on foreign exports, because we may have to do without them sometime in the future. In this hard world we have to learn the virtues of austerity and do without anything that is not essential. We may have to produce some substitutes for the things we import. To a large extent, this can be done, if necessity arises.

18. I wrote to you in my last letter that the food situation had shown definite signs of improvement. I based that on the report of our Food Ministry. That was an overall view for all-India. As a matter of fact, in Bengal and Madras, the food situation is far from good, partly because of lack of rains and partly because of the huge influx of refugees in West Bengal. That means that we have to work hard for food production. I have previously drawn your attention to the necessity for pushing subsidiary foods.[16] That necessity may be all the greater in future. Certain

13. Loy Henderson (1892-1986). U.S diplomat; Ambassador to India, 1948-51; member, United States delegation to London Conference on Suez, 1956.

14. Henderson met Nehru at Delhi on 29 June 1950.

15. See *ante*, p. 120.

16. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, p. 453.

recent experiments in our Food Research Institute tend to show that some of these substitutes can be used with profit by themselves or mixed with other grains. This at least gives us an assurance that in a time of crisis we can depend on ourselves alone, even though we may not get exactly the food we like. It is desirable, therefore, to some extent for people to be educated to vary their food habits a little. Much need not be attempted at this stage.

19. In this developing drama of Asia, it is clear that China must play a great part. It is, therefore, important that we should understand China and know what is happening there. Opinions vary about the general trend of China's policy. Some think that China will function more or less as a satellite of the U.S.S.R., both in foreign and domestic policy. Others think that this will not be so and China will develop on her own lines, though aiming generally at the Communist objective. We have had many reports from our Ambassador in Peking and I should like to share some of them with you. I am enclosing these with this letter.[17] You will find that China is proceeding with considerable caution but at the same time with tremendous vitality. The leaders of this China are evidently realists and do not propose to follow an adventurist policy. We have just received the members of the Chinese diplomatic mission in New Delhi.[18]

20. The situation in East and West Bengal and in Assam continues to be more or less the same. That is to say it is generally unsatisfactory, though it has considerably toned down and is at a low level. I am glad to say that the Calcutta press has improved greatly and both the Pakistan and the Bengal press have accepted a code of behaviour which was placed before them by the newspaper editors of both sides. Migration

17. Not printed.

18. Chen Chien, Charge d'Affaires of the Chinese Embassy, called on officials in the Ministry of External Affairs on 14 July 1950.

continues at a high rate in both directions and at the same time many of the previous migrants return. For some days the rate of Hindus coming over to West Bengal became rather high. Now it has gone down somewhat. This increase in the volume of the exodus was partly due to the monsoon and the rise of the river levels, which provided better facilities for travelling by river boats. But it is clear that internal conditions in East Bengal do not yet produce any feeling of security in the minds of the minority and daily incidents occur and pin-pricks, which tend to frighten the minorities. Barisal continues to be bad. Meanwhile, the problem of rehabilitation grows bigger and bigger. It is obvious that we cannot tackle it adequately without the full co-operation of all the other States. That co-operation has not been lacking and I am grateful for that. Nevertheless, it has to be on a much bigger scale if we are to solve this problem and I would like to draw your earnest attention to this.

21. Indo-Pakistan relations generally continue to be uneasy. There is no marked improvement in them, in so far as any solution of the problem is concerned. Some progress has been made regarding evacuee property, but it is not much yet. In any event, attempts at solution continue. Meanwhile, goodwill missions go backwards and forwards between India and Pakistan and receive big welcomes on the other side. That is a very healthy sign and shows that the people generally want peace and co-operation.

22. One of the major difficulties in the way of our settling many of our differences with Pakistan has, as you know, been the exchange rate. Pakistan has now definitely joined the International Monetary Fund.[19] As a consequence of this, some final decision about the exchange rate should be made within the next two or three months, unless Pakistan adopts delaying tactics. That decision and solution should go a long way to bring about some normality.

19. On 11 July 1950.

23. Ever since Sir Owen Dixon came as U.N. mediator on Kashmir, he has spent most of his time in Jammu and Kashmir State. He has visited almost every part of it and no doubt formed some opinion. What this is, I do not know. I saw him two days ago on his return from Kashmir. He suggested a meeting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan in Delhi. We told him that we were always prepared to meet Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan but it was not clear to us how we would consider the question. We had met previously on several occasions and discussed the Kashmir issue without coming to a settlement. It would be unfortunate if that was repeated. Sir Owen Dixon said that all he could do was to bring us together. The problem should be discussed at the topmost level. It was no good corresponding and exchanging notes as in the past. If he had any suggestions to make, they would be naturally in terms of the U.N. resolution. If nothing came out of that, it would be open to the parties concerned to explore other avenues. There the matter rests. It is not very satisfactory. However, at Sir Owen's suggestion, I have invited the Prime Minister of Pakistan to come to Delhi on the 20th of this month.

24. A leading figure among the Sikhs in the Punjab, who ought to know better, has again started an agitation for what he calls a separate homeland for the Sikhs.[20] He has not hesitated even to throw out feelers to Pakistan and to hint vaguely at an independent Sikh State.[21] The astonishing futility of this demand and this approach does not prevent him from continuing this agitation, which is not only unpatriotic, but can

20. In a press interview on 11 July 1950, Master Tara Singh demanded a separate Sikh state to "protect the Sikhs from the communalism of the majority." He also asserted that they were "consolidating Sikh opinion and when it is fully done, no power will be able to resist our demand."

21. In an interview to *Dawn* (Karachi) on 12 July, Master Tara Singh spoke of the "inevitability" of war between Pakistan and India, and added "this will be an opportunity for Khalsa to re-establish Sikh rule in the land." He wanted that the proposed Punjabi-speaking province should include the area up to Nankana Sahib in Sheikhpura district in West Punjab and in its place the Jammu and Kashmir state be ceded to Pakistan.

only lead to grave injury to the Sikhs. The Sikhs have suffered greatly in the past from bad leadership and, to some extent, this misfortune continues. Most of them realize that these adventurist tactics can lead to no good and indeed they attach so little importance to them that they do not care even to reply. I think it is unwise to allow these wrong tendencies to grow and they should always be nipped in the bud by adequate propaganda by the people concerned. The one lesson we have learnt through blood and tears is that the unity and integration of India is essential to maintain our freedom and to make progress with some rapidity. In the present confused and dangerous state of the world, only a person devoid of all vision and sense of perspective can preach any doctrine which must disrupt India. It is necessary, therefore, for every such move to be countered by adequate propaganda and by clear enunciation of our policies. We should not leave any doubt in people's minds as to where we stand.

25. This applies to other reactionary and disruptive tendencies also such as communal tendencies in any other group in India. So far as the minorities are concerned, communalism naturally injures them. But it is the responsibility of the majority to free itself from this communal approach to any problem. Unfortunately, owing to past events many among even Congressmen speak a language today which would have been surprising a few years ago. I think that it is of the utmost importance that on this communal question we should repeat our policy of non-communalism freely and frankly and not allow these wrong, reactionary, disruptive and narrow-minded movements to gather weight.

26. The next Congress session has been fixed for September 12th at Nasik.[22] That session will meet at a critical moment in our history and may well lay down basic policies for the future. We should be clear about these policies and not allow any vagueness or drift to continue.

22. It was postponed to 20-21 September 1950.

27. The Fiscal Commission's report[23] has just come out and I commend it to your attention. We have to view these problems not in the narrow way of the old fiscal commissions and tariff boards, but with the broad approach of this new Fiscal Commission. You will notice the importance they attach to planning. There is indeed no satisfactory method for solving our problems, except the planned approach. The Planning Commission here is applying itself to its tasks in all earnestness and I hope that in the course of a month or two they will produce something for your consideration.

28. Shri Rajagopalachari has arrived in Delhi. Unfortunately, ill health prevented him from coming here earlier. His presence in the Cabinet is going to be of the greatest help to us in facing the difficult problems and situations that confront us.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. The report, released on 13 July 1950, advocated decentralization of big industries, total protection to defence and strategic industries and protection to basic and key industries as per the tariff authority's recommendations. The report also stressed that protection should not result in unequal distribution of wealth or uncoordinated growth of industries.

20*

New Delhi
22 July, 1950

The Health Minister [1] has drawn my attention to statements made both by Ministers of the Central Government and sometimes by Ministers of State Governments in regard to the public use of what are called the indigenous systems of medicine. The use of the word, 'indigenous' is not entirely correct in this connection. Normally this refers to the Ayurvedic[2] and Unani[3] systems. Sometimes reference is also made to the homoeopathic and similar systems of medicine also.

Quite apart from the merits of any of these systems, it is desirable that our policy should be uniform and that Ministers should generally support that policy. Sometimes it so happens (I have a case of a State Minister in mind) when what is called modern medicine was condemned and the older systems were praised. Obviously this kind of thing produces confusion in the public mind and interferes with the growth of any uniform procedure and methods.

It is the business of the Health Ministry to propose a uniform policy and to get the approval of the Cabinet to it. In fact, some such attempt was made about a year ago and Cabinet laid down, as far as I remember, some general rules. A committee

* A note sent to all the Chief Ministers.

1. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 364.
2. Ancient system of Indian medicine.
3. The Greco-Arab system of medicine which was introduced into India in medieval times.

was appointed to go into this matter and this committee submitted its report.[4] I do not know what has been done since.

It is obviously desirable for us not only to retain whatever there is of good in the older systems of medicine, but also to improve them by all means at our disposal. The question really is whether we should proceed in a haphazard, unscientific way of adhering to some tradition, or to have some scientific basis for our work. What is called modern medicine is really a growth out of the older systems and it has profited considerably by those systems. What has happened is that a new approach, which might be called a scientific approach, has been applied to problems of medicine, public health, etc. The question before us is whether the scientific approach should be considered desirable or even essential or not. I think there can be only one answer to this question and that is that we must proceed on strictly scientific lines and apply this to every system of medicine, whether it is Ayurvedic, Unani or any other. Thus the science of medicine would not be divided up into compartments but would be built up on solid foundations of past and present experience tested by modern scientific methods.

There is no doubt that there are very effective remedies in Ayurvedic and the Unani systems and, scientifically utilized, they can be of the greatest use. But it is important that the method of science be applied to them. In surgery, which is so important, there is no alternative to modern methods. Even in

4. The committee recommended in 1948 the establishment of special research institutions "to clear these systems of medicine of accretions of centuries of doubtful value and to give scientific meaning and significance to the fundamentals of these systems so that they may be accepted by science." The committee stressed the need for adoption of modern scientific methods in the development of the indigenous systems of medicine. So another committee under Dr. C.G. Pandit's chairmanship prepared a detailed scheme to develop a research centre at Jamnagar and to institute chairs in history of medicine in the universities.

medicine proper, the approach should be the same, that is a scientific one of experiment.

Homoeopathy is also occasionally mentioned in this connection. Again I would say that the approach to it should be scientific. So far as I know, homoeopathy is practised in India mostly by people who have had no real training of any kind and have just read a few books on the subject.

The State should not encourage any person to practise medicine without proper qualifications. There must be a basic qualification for everyone who intends practising medicine, whether he adopts the Ayurvedic or the Unani or the homoeopathic or the biochemist or naturopathic or any other method. That is to say the training must be scientific and normally the training that is given in our medical colleges.

It is often said that some systems of medicine are cheaper and therefore more suitable. That is hardly an argument. We should make prevention and treatment of disease cheap. But we cannot do so regardless of its efficacy or utility.

The proper approach, therefore, should be that any system of medicine to be followed or encouraged must be modern and up-to-date and should take advantage of all the accumulated knowledge we possess. That system can be called by any name.

Jawaharlal Nehru

21

New Delhi
3 August, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am a little late in writing to you this fortnightly letter. The last few days have had a rush of activities ending up with the opening of a Parliamentary session.[1] I have had the misfortune, just at this moment, to develop an irritating cold, which has rather come in the way of my normal work.

2. Even today I do not propose to write to you at any considerable length. In regard to some of the major questions before us, you will no doubt keep in touch with the proceedings in Parliament. This session has been convened especially because of the Korean situation. This changes from day to day and does not change for the better. You will have read of my personal appeal[2] to Marshal Stalin[3] and Mr. Dean Acheson.[4] That ended in failure.[5] But I do not regret having made that appeal. At any rate, it made many people think that something possibly could be done to stop this onward rush to world catastrophe. The most terrible thing that happens during these crises is a feeling of fatality that nothing more is possible except to jump into the abyss. Every country or its government is afraid of the other gaining a more advantageous position and

1. On 31 July 1950.
2. See *ante*, p. 145.
3. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 164.
4. (1893-1971). American lawyer and politician; U.S. Secretary of State, 1949-53.
5. Acheson rejected on 18 July India's proposal that the U.S. should help facilitate the admission of People's Republic of China into the Security Council in return for a ceasefire in Korea and for that purpose she should join efforts with the Soviet Union.

therefore is not prepared to talk or discuss or consider the problem dispassionately. So, every such effort, as I have ventured to make, is dubbed appeasement and therefore to be rejected.

3. For many months past, our policy has aimed at getting the People's Government of China admitted into the United Nations. We felt that this was necessary to stop the progressive deterioration of the world situation and the possible disintegration of the United Nations. The new Government in China was a fact, which nobody could deny or ignore. It was a stable and strong Government, likely to endure, and had controlled a vast territory. China's not being admitted into the United Nations resulted in the U.S.S.R. also keeping out as well as some of the Soviet satellite countries. This meant that a very large part of the world was outside the United Nations. Thus the U.N. ceased to represent the nations of the world. It is immaterial whose fault this was. The fact remained that the United Nations ceased to be what it was meant to be, that is, a forum where all countries could meet and discuss their problems, and quarrel, if necessary. It was fatal for the U.N. to function without a large group of nations. It was for this reason that the Secretary-General of the United Nations undertook a tour, some months ago, of some important capitals.

4. It seemed to us that an essential preliminary to the solution of the problems before us was the inclusion of the People's Government of China into the United Nations. Every other approach would have been held up because of this. It was in fact the realization of a patent fact. Unfortunately, our appeal was not heeded. The U.S.S.R., however, have returned to the Security Council[6] and it is just possible that one of the reasons for their going back there was our appeal to them and to the

6. Jacob A. Malik, the Soviet representative, returned to the Security Council on 1 August 1950 after remaining absent since 13 January 1950 and, in accordance with the established practice of rotation, became President for the month of August.

U.S.A.. Again, in the Security Council, the question of China has been raised and has been defeated.[7] We have followed a consistent and logical policy and I cannot see how we, or any country that has recognized the new China, could have acted otherwise. Yet the fact remains that the U.K. Government and Norway, although they have recognized the new China, had stood in the way of its admission to the U.N.[8] All kinds of procedural difficulties have been raised, as if minor matters of procedure should be allowed to come in the way of the consideration of vital world problems. Meanwhile, the world goes forward to some inevitable climax. The odd thing is that many people take for granted that war will solve this or any other problem. They forget past experience. They do not realize that even victory in war does not yield the results aimed at.

5. In a sense the return of the U.S.S.R. to the Security Council has eased the tension. That is to say, one does not sense world war in the near future. The Korean war will, however, go on and it is estimated that it should take at least six months or possibly more, that is, provided it does not spread meanwhile. There is always a danger of that.

6. Our domestic problems are serious enough and of more intimate concern to us than what happens in Korea or elsewhere abroad. But from another point of view, Korea is more important because if this fighting spreads, it will

7. The ruling of the President of the Security Council on 1 August that "the representative of the Kuomintang group could not participate in the Council's meetings as the group did not represent China" was supported by the Soviet Union, India and Yugoslavia, but challenged and rejected by the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Egypt, Norway, Cuba and Ecuador who charged that the President had exceeded his authority.

8. An official British spokesman said on 15 July that ceasefire and the Communist withdrawal from South Korea must take precedence over all other questions and the United Kingdom would take "no initiative in any moves to admit the Chinese Communist Government into the United Nations."

inevitably affect all our domestic problems and put a heavy burden on our already strained economy. The food situation has suddenly grown worse. I gave you a fairly optimistic account of food production in my previous letters. That account holds good still. Nevertheless, in local areas, especially in Madras, Bihar and Bombay, there have been serious shortages due to various reasons. There has been a lack of rain in some places and floods in Bihar and Saurashtra. But the main difficulty has been a defective administrative machinery to deal with procurement and distribution. This has become a very urgent problem for us because it does not matter much what progress we make in production or otherwise, if the machinery in the States cannot take advantage of it. The situation in Bihar has more especially made us think hard. Our Food Minister, Shri K.M. Munshi, is convinced that there is plenty of food round about in Bihar itself. But anti-social elements grab it and keep it underground while people starve. How are we to meet this situation? We cannot look on supinely at the activities of relatively small groups of people holding up the whole community to ransom. If the existing law is not adequate to deal with this situation, something more has to be devised. Indeed, it may be necessary to declare a state of emergency in a particular region where the state machinery is not functioning properly and there is great scarcity and distress.

7. The Food Minister spoke in Parliament yesterday. He is a newcomer to this business, but he has already devoted himself with great energy to this difficult task and brought a fresh mind to bear upon it.[9] He pointed out the difficulties of the Centre in

9. Describing the food situation "as difficult but not desperate", K M Munshi assured Parliament on 2 August that the Government would be able to meet the situation through its eight-point programme which included pursuing a sound fiscal and monetary policy to fight inflation; implementing programmes of Grow-More-Food Campaign to achieve self-sufficiency in food, cotton and jute, schemes for maximizing industrial production; programmes for rural unemployed; preparing a balanced plan; and maintaining good relations with neighbouring countries.

dealing with this problem.[10] The Centre, of course, gets all the blame and each State demands all kinds of help from the Centre all the time. But the Centre is not an inexhaustible storehouse for everything needed. It is only a co-ordinating factor drawing sustenance from the States. If the States fail to do their duty, the Centre cannot discharge its functions. There has been far too much slackness in some of the States, more especially those that are called surplus States. There has been hardly any real attempt in some States (not all) to profit by the increased production and to procure it. Official machinery is weak and sometimes almost absent. Apparently there is a fear that if any effective action is taken, the political consequences in the shape of votes may be undesirable. The result is that the State takes little trouble itself and throws the blame upon the Centre. This is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

8. It is not much good our blaming each other. The point is that we have got to grip this situation and forget elections and everything else for the time being. If we fail in doing so, then we automatically fail in everything else too later. It is a matter for very serious consideration for each State how best to put forward all its energy in creating proper machinery for procurement and distribution. All our Grow-More-Food schemes will founder, if that machinery is lacking. The Central Government is perfectly prepared to assume responsibility, wherever needed. At present, it is in the unenviable position of responsibility for everything without power to do much.

9. You will forgive me for writing in this way and generalizing about the States. I am trying to avoid mentioning particular States which have not come up to the mark. Others, of course, have done well. I should like to mention especially the way in which the Saurashtra Government met a serious flood situation with efficiency. I feel strongly that our government machinery

10. Munshi attributed India's lack of self-sufficiency in food to the absence of a uniform and efficient system of procurement and distribution.

generally is not functioning as it should and this is particularly true of some of the States. If we do not pull up now, we shall have to suffer very serious consequences.

10. While human beings suffer because of scarcity of food in some areas, it is at least as unfortunate that horses and cattle have suddenly been caused a great deal of hardship by the disappearance of gram from the market. There has obviously been a breakdown in the arrangement for the distribution of gram. There is little doubt that the gram is there; but it is not easily available. Here again is a case of utter lack of co-ordination in our work.

11. One of the factors which has led to the recent rise in prices and hoarding is the talk of war. This makes it all the more necessary for us to take effective steps to prevent profiteers and the like from making hay at the expense of the people generally. I should like you to consider this aspect of the matter and take full powers to deal with the situation. I have no doubt that strong measures will yield results. Somehow, we have got so tied up with the intricacies of the law that we cannot take any step without being entangled in it for months and years.

12. As you know, we had a visit from the Prime Minister of Pakistan to discuss the Kashmir problem with the U.N. representative, Sir Owen Dixon.[11] The discussions yielded little result, and yet there is some hope.[12] We are exploring various avenues and Sir Owen Dixon has now gone to Pakistan.

11. From 20 to 24 July 1950.

12. Sir Owen Dixon proposed: (1) withdrawal of forces by both Pakistan and India followed by the appointment of political agents by the United Nations to administer and guard through the local officers the northern approaches to the Valley, (2) replacement of the regular Government of Kashmir and that of 'Azad Kashmir' by an administrative body consisting of the officers of the United Nations; and (3) zonal plebiscites in place of an overall plebiscite. Though these proposals enabled Pakistan to retain some of the advantages of her aggression, India was willing to consider the suggestion; but Pakistan showed no willingness to think in terms of any settlement.

13. The Bengal situation will be discussed soon in Parliament.[13] I enclose a note prepared for the occasion which will give you some figures.[14] These are interesting and give us a better idea of what is happening there in regard to migrations than all the vague statements that are made. The situation is far from satisfactory, but it is certainly not nearly as bad as is painted. Recently, a refugee conference was held in Delhi [15] and I was amazed to read the speeches of some persons who ought to have spoken with a greater sense of responsibility.[16] Many of the proposals made there are fantastic and have no relation to facts.[17] Whatever else they might lead to, they would not help the unfortunate minorities who are suffering.

14. A trade delegation, headed by Shri P.A. Narielwala,[18] will be going soon to Indonesia [19] for the purpose of exploring the possibility of expanding trade with that country. The delegation will also visit Malaya and Burma.

15. It has been decided that with effect from the 15th August, 1950, Indian coastal trade will be reserved for Indian shipping companies. The final elimination of foreign companies plying on the coast will take some months, possibly a year.

13. From 7 to 9 August 1950.

14. Not printed.

15. It was held on 29 and 30 July under the presidentship of Purushottam Das Tandon.

16. Purshottam Das Tandon had suggested that a capital levy be imposed on private property throughout the country and a certain proportion of such property acquired compulsorily to provide adequate compensation to the refugees. S.P. Mookerjee argued that "if Pakistan continues to remain an Islamic state then those who demanded its formation but are still in India have to go there."

17. The conference resolved that the Bengal problem could be solved either by unification of Bengal or by planned exchanges of population, lands and assets, or, by Pakistan yielding enough land as would help to settle those who had been displaced. The conference placed before the Government fifteen demands of the refugees and urged it to fulfil them within "four months."

18. (b. 1900). For many years in the service of Tatas; a friend of the Nehru family; Secretary, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1980-85.

19. The delegation reached Indonesia on 7 September 1950.

16. Most of the States have been struggling with the problem of abolition of *jagirdaris* and zamindaris. These are, of course, essential parts of Congress policy and programme and there has been already great delay in giving effect to our promises. We have been held up by the extraordinary intricacy of the problem, more especially in regard to compensation. Various States have proceeded on their own lines. Some have got completely held up. It is obvious that such a problem must be viewed as a whole and only then can effective steps be taken. What sometimes happens is that a first step is thought of and the rest is left for future consideration. High Courts sometimes intervene and declare State laws as *ultra vires*. It is clear that we have got to go through this programme of abolition of zamindaris and to avoid all delay, for delay is dangerous. Unfortunately, the law and the Constitution sometimes come in the way. I think we could devise methods which are in conformity with the Constitution. It is certain that if the law comes in the way, ultimately the law will have to be changed, because it is of the utmost importance that this agrarian reform should be put through.

17. The recent air disaster near Pathankot was a warning to us.[20] There is going to be a full enquiry into it. We cannot afford to take the slightest risk in air travel. We have expanded our air services rapidly and with remarkable success. Indeed, we have done rather well and accidents have been few. But that does not mean that we should grow complacent. The growth of air services can only be based on a sure foundation of security.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. On 17 July, a Dakota aircraft of the Indian National Airways crashed on its flight from Delhi to Srinagar killing all the passengers and crew.

22

New Delhi
18 August, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Three days ago, I stood on the ramparts of the Red Fort of Old Delhi and a vast multitude was assembled in front of me. We were celebrating the third anniversary of independence. I spoke to them about various matters [1] and more particularly, about the food situation.[2] But even as I spoke, the picture of this world of ours, so full of conflict and trouble and contradictions, came up before me and then, the picture of my own country with all the multiplicity of her problems. How to deal with these problems, how to surmount our difficulties, how to attain our objectives? And what were, after all, these objectives? Were we clear about them, or were we just groping about in the dark between two worlds, one dead and the other yet to be born? Many of us worked hard enough and exhausted ourselves in this endeavour. Were we working aright, and was our work bearing fruit as it should? We put on a brave face to give confidence to ourselves and others, but sometimes doubts creep into our minds.

2. Three years is not a long time. It is a very brief period in a nation's history. And yet sometimes a nation may cover almost

1. Addressing the nation on the Independence Day, Nehru referred to events in Bengal and the problems created by food shortages, hoarding, profiteering and the activities of anti-social elements which threatened the peace and unity of the country. He also expressed his concern over the rapidly deteriorating situation in East Asia.

2. Nehru attributed the continuing food scarcity to the conditions created by the War, the partition of the country and the growing population. He reiterated his Government's commitment to make the country self-sufficient in food production and to cease all food imports after 1951.

an age in the course of a brief period. We measure time by the clock and the sun, but the real measurement lies in our own sensations and experiences, and during these brief three years, we have had experience and sensation enough, often of a painful character. Our achievements have been many and only the perverse will deny them. And yet, the fact remains that, in spite of much in the way of achievement and work done, there is a malaise and a sense of frustration among our people. The days of flaming enthusiasm for a cause are long passed. Even a moderate faith in the present and in the future is often lacking. And so, the problem before us becomes essentially a psychological one, of how to capture the minds and hearts of our people, including ourselves, and yoke them to constructive and satisfying effort at building up the nation. It is foolish to grow pessimistic and not to appreciate fully the country's achievements. It is equally foolish to be smug and complacent, when obviously things are not as they should be. The malady is not of our country only but of the world; perhaps we are a little less affected by it than some other parts of the world.

3. These thoughts came to me in the Red Fort of Old Delhi, which itself was the embodiment of a bright period of India's past. I spoke to the people and tried to convey to them the faith that was in me. But I could not get away from the other side of the picture. I spoke a little of the world situation, of the tragic happenings in Bengal and of other matters. I spoke more especially about the food situation and rising prices and the greed of people who wish to profit even at the cost of the nation. I asked for support and co-operation in fighting these anti-social elements, who do not hesitate to injure the nation, provided only they get some individual or group profit out of it.

4. We have to progress in many directions, for we are backward and have to make up rapidly for lost time and lost opportunity. We discuss agricultural improvement, industrial progress, housing, health, education and the problem of refugees. All this is necessary and has to be done. But behind it all lies the human factor, the character of the nation, and if this

goes wrong, then all else is of little worth. I have sensed a process of deterioration and disintegration and faction and little-mindedness asserting itself from day to day and affecting all our national activities. The major problem for us, therefore, today is how to deal with this deadening process, how to check it and put an end to it. If we are not big enough to do so, then others will have to make the attempt. As Prime Minister, I feel a special responsibility and the burden grows heavier from day to day.

5. Nature has been unkind to us. Just when we were expressing satisfaction at the progress made on the food front and the fine harvests, there came flood and havoc, or lack of rain or excess of it, and cyclone, and now, a great earthquake in Assam.[3] There has also been another very serious railway disaster near Banaras.[4] And yet, I do not mind much the vagaries of nature. We can fight them and overcome them, if we do not go contrary to the laws of nature. It is the human factor that counts most.

6. We have just had an emergency session of Parliament.[5] Its main purpose was to consider the international situation, and more especially, the recent happenings in Korea, where war is being waged. There was a full debate on the Korean situation and, in spite of many criticisms from various points of view,[6] there was a general acceptance of Government's policy. There was also a full debate[7] on the Bengal situation and the Indo-Pakistan Agreement of April 8th. A third, and very important matter, which came up before Parliament was the necessity of emergency legislation empowering Government to take

3. The earthquake on 15 August caused heavy loss of life and widespread damage, specially in Upper Assam.

4. In a collision between a passenger train and a goods train on 13 August near Moghalsarai, 23 persons were killed and 200 injured.

5. From 31 July to 14 August 1950.

6. In the debate, some members criticized the Government for the policy of "neutrality" and others for their policy of "appeasement."

7. From 7 to 9 August 1950.

deterrent steps against hoarding foodgrains, rise in price, etc.[8] There was almost unanimous support of this in Parliament. When I referred to this matter in my speech from the Red Fort, there was an immediate response from the people. It is clear that the people expect Government to take strong action, and if we fail, the responsibility must be ours.

7. India has taken no special step during the last fortnight in regard to the Korean affair. We have tried to adhere to our policy of supporting the U.N. resolution on Korea and, at the same time, not committing ourselves to any extension of it in any way. There are frequent references in the press of India initiating some other step.[9] Most of these are wrong. We are naturally anxious and eager to help in the maintenance of peace and in preventing the Korean war from developing into a world war. But we have felt that the time is not ripe for any positive step to that end. I believe that India's attitude, though it has not brought forth any obvious fruit, has undoubtedly been a great factor in preventing further deterioration of a bad situation. Almost everyone recognizes our integrity of purpose and our intense desire for peace, even though many may not agree with what we do. I think it would be perfectly true to say that India's prestige stands high in the world today and vast numbers of people everywhere look to India to save the situation. Whether we can do so or not, I cannot say. But we shall endeavour to do our best.

8. The war situation in South Korea is bad at present from the point of view of the United Nations. It will, no doubt, improve but that will take time. We have to consider, however, not only the war situation but possible developments in the

8. Parliament passed on 14 August 1950 the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Amendment Bill which provided for drastic punishment of hoarders of foodgrains, cotton textiles and other essential goods.

9. For example, *The Hindustan Times* of 4 August reported that there was speculation in informed circles in London that India would propose at the United Nations, with Soviet and Chinese support, a mediation commission for reaching a settlement in Korea and Taiwan.

future and what our objective should be in regard to Korea. Merely a negative attitude is not good enough. It is clear that the Korean problem will not be solved just by military measures. It is clear also that finally it will be for the people of Korea to decide upon their future. We have to take care in the present to avoid doing anything which might come in the way of a future settlement. That is difficult when war breaks out, because war produces its own logic and the consequences that flow from it come in the way of the objectives we had aimed at. New problems arise and violence and hatred blind people's minds.

9. There is some hope now that the Korean war will not spread out in the near future. But the peril has not passed by any means and Formosa stands out as a danger point. The Chinese Government and people are bent on taking possession of Formosa and if they try to do so, there is bound to be conflict on a bigger scale. Tibet also is no longer secure and there are rumours of a Chinese invasion of it.[10] Whatever the rights and wrongs may be in regard to Tibet, we are convinced that its future should be settled by peaceful means and we have impressed our viewpoint upon the Chinese Government.[11]

10. The debate on the Bengal situation led to many speeches, some of them often passionate in tone, expressing entirely

10. On 1 January 1950, it had been officially announced that the 'liberation of Tibet' was one of the 'main tasks' of the People's Liberation Army. On 1 August, General Chu Teh said that the "war of liberation" was not yet over because "we still have to liberate Tibet and Formosa." On 5 August, General Liu Po Chin stated that China intended to march on Tibet at an early date.

11. K.M. Panikkar met the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister on 13 August 1950 at Beijing and communicated the Indian viewpoint.

varying viewpoints.[12] Parliament did not pass any positive resolution on the subject and it may be said that they agreed generally with the Government's policy. Yet, there were many strong critics. There is no doubt that there is not only much dissatisfaction but a feeling of apprehension also in regard to Bengal. This has led some people to making proposals which seem to me completely impractical and objectionable. I dealt with this matter in my speech in the House.[13] These differences arise from the premises and objectives being different. It is, therefore, necessary for clarity of thought and definition of objective. We have repeatedly declared that we are opposed to communalism. And yet in our thinking and action we are often influenced by the communal outlook. That way danger lies. I have been more troubled by this than any other matter in India. We can meet and fight an external enemy. But what are we to do when the enemy is within ourselves and in our own minds and hearts? I think it has become essential for the Congress to lay down specifically and precisely what our approach is to this communal problem in all its aspects. Are we to adhere to the old Congress policy or should we drift in the direction of communalism and revivalism? It is no good our trying to slur over this question or to bypass it because it is

12. S.P. Mookerjee believed that exchange of population on communal lines or cession of territory by Pakistan was the solution to the problem being faced in Bengal. While Thakurdas Bhargava and H.V. Kamath supported Mookerjee, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar and Shankarrao Deo maintained that conditions in Bengal had improved following the Delhi Agreement. Shyamanandan Sahaya did not agree with Mookerjee's suggestions but agreed with Sucheta Kripalani and Arun Chandra Guha that the Delhi Agreement had failed in its chief object of instilling confidence among the minorities as Hindus refused to return to East Bengal. Renuka Ray demanded more effective steps to rehabilitate refugees. K.T. Shah appealed to Government to ensure that minorities in Pakistan lived with honour and for that purpose they should appeal to the United Nations, resort to economic sanctions or even go to war.

13. Nehru on 9 August described Mookerjee's proposals to solve the problem as "fantastic" and contrary to Congress ideals and principles. He said that his Government would fight to the utmost "whether in the council chamber or in the fields and market place", the idea of cession of territory by Pakistan and exchange of population.

inconvenient. There must be a clear decision either way and the Congress and the Government must follow that decision.

11. I shall not write to you much about the Bengal situation, because you must have read a great deal of what was said in the House on this subject. The situation is undoubtedly grave. At the same time, there is a tendency to exaggerate it and make it appear worse than it is. I should like to share with you some new information that we have received about the migrations. We have daily over 7,000 Hindu migrants coming from East Bengal to West Bengal and also about 5,000 Hindu migrants returning from West Bengal to East Bengal. These figures are rather misleading because they apply to all kinds of travellers and not to migrants as such. On a careful check being made, we discovered that a large number of people going in either direction were not migrants at all. They were ordinary travellers between one country and the other. Then there were a considerable number of smugglers crossing the border frequently. Thirdly, many refugees themselves went backwards and forwards several times, some of them as many as eight times. All this helped to swell the number of those who are migrating. We are having a further and more detailed check made. But even so, it is clear that the number of migrants in either direction was much less than we had imagined at first. It is big enough still, but the number at any rate now appears to be more amenable to control.

12. But there is absolutely no room for complacency and the situation continues to be full of possible danger. A continuing influx for a considerable time itself creates difficult problems and explosive situations. Behind this lie passions and prejudices, fear and apprehension, and emotional reactions on both sides. We cannot directly control what happens in Pakistan. And much that happens there is not good. But we ought to be able to control what happens in India and thereby affect the situation in Pakistan. I am convinced that if we had the situation in hand completely on our side, we would develop

enough strength and authority to influence powerfully what happens on the other side. It is necessary that we should not wait passively on events but try to meet their challenge constructively and with faith.

13. The two Central Ministers of India and Pakistan, appointed specially to help in the implementation of the Agreement of April 8th, 1950, Shri Biswas and Dr. Malik, came to Delhi early this month.[14] With them came the Chairmen of the Minority Commissions of East Bengal[15] and West Bengal[16] as well as the two Chief Secretaries of the two provinces.[17] We had full discussions in Delhi and then they all left for Karachi, where further discussions were held. As a result of all these discussions, a number of decisions were arrived at.[18] These have just been published in the press.[19] They deal practically with many of the problems that trouble us from day to day in Bengal and they suggest ways of dealing with them. They are comprehensive and detailed and approach the problem from a practical point of view. If these decisions are given effect to, as I hope they will be, they should go far towards improving the present situation. Among these, there is a suggestion that there should be continuous and sustained propaganda about the decisions arrived at in the Indo-Pakistan Agreement and subsequently. This is important so that people might know exactly what we have jointly decided. It is important also, from the psychological point of view, to make people feel that we are tackling, not without success, this difficult problem. In this work, Governments should of course take a full share, but it is

14. Nehru met them on 5 and 12 August 1950.

15. Toffazzal Ali.

16. K.P. Mukerjee

17. Aziz Ahmed and S.N. Ray.

18. At the conclusion of their talks on 10 August at Karachi, the two Ministers agreed to adopt measures to check communal violence, restore property to those who returned to their homes, tighten the procedure for recovery and restoration of abducted women and punish the offenders.

19. On 16 August 1950.

not entirely governmental work. The press and other non-officials have at least an equally important part to play. There have been recently some goodwill missions going from India to Pakistan and *vice versa*. These missions have done a great deal of good. I commend to your Government that they might initiate and encourage publicity and propaganda of this type.

14. Among the recent decisions arrived at, there are those relating to urban and rural property and to the requisitioning and de-requisitioning of houses.[20] Importance has naturally been attached to the recovery and restoration of abducted women. Fortunately this problem is of relatively small dimensions in Bengal.

15. Parliament has recently passed the Displaced Persons (Claims) Act, 1950.[21] This was meant to invite and verify claims of displaced persons to urban immovable property left over in West Pakistan. It is necessary that such claims should be received and carefully checked before we can take any further steps in the matter. The evacuee property problem has been a very difficult one and has exercised the minds of a large number of people. No solution has yet been arrived at. But there is just a glimmer of hope now that some solution may be found. It must be remembered that, in law and in theory, all evacuee properties, whether in Western Pakistan or in East Punjab, Delhi and elsewhere, still belong to their original owners, even though they are in the possession of a Custodian. We should like to settle them as soon as possible with refugees. Before that an agreement with Pakistan on this issue is necessary. Meanwhile it is important that we should be ready with our own data, and hence the necessity for receiving claims and verifying them, in so far as is possible.

20. It was agreed that the Governments of East and West Bengal and Assam should immediately assume necessary powers to have urban and rural property restored to the original owners on their return.

21. The Act passed on 18 May 1950 provided for the registration and verification of claims of displaced persons in respect of immovable property in Pakistan.

16. Indo-Pakistan relations have got stuck up over many matters, apart from those referred to above. There is the question of canal waters and the exchange ratio, which affects all our trade. This matter of the exchange may soon come up before the International Monetary Fund. If there is a satisfactory decision there, it will go some way towards improving the trade between India and Pakistan and relieving many other tensions, such as in railway traffic.

17. Then there is the old question of Kashmir. We have had repeated talks with Sir Owen Dixon, the U.N. representative, and he has then gone to Karachi. Thus far, I regret to say, these talks have not yielded any substantial result. You will remember that we are all committed to the basic policy of the people of Kashmir deciding their own future. We have said that right from the beginning and we adhere to it. When the Security Council decided in favour of a plebiscite, we accepted this decision. Later conflict came in regard to certain preliminary conditions which have to be agreed to before a plebiscite could take place. We insisted that all Pakistan regular and irregular forces must be withdrawn from the whole of Jammu and Kashmir state and the so-called 'Azad' Forces should be disbanded and disarmed. We made certain other suggestions also and it was subject to all these suggestions that we accepted the Security Council's resolution. This was made perfectly clear not only in our written communications, but also in the speech which Shri B.N. Rau delivered before the Security Council.[22] We went as far as we could, but we refused to permit Pakistan to profit by its aggression or to have anything to do with the plebiscite. That was a matter between us and the United Nations.

18. There was no agreement on this issue and the matter went back to the Security Council. Thereupon, Sir Owen Dixon was sent as a kind of a mediator. He tried to bridge these differences in regard to an overall plebiscite for the whole state.

22. On 13 February 1950.

He failed to do so. Then, in accordance with the Security Council resolution, he tried to explore other possibilities of solving the problem. In brief, these were a partial plebiscite and other arrangements by agreement in regard to the remaining areas. We were not enamoured of this approach, nevertheless, we told Sir Owen Dixon that we were prepared to consider it, provided the other party, i.e., Pakistan, was also so prepared. We now understand that Pakistan has put forward certain conditions which are quite impossible for us to accept.[23] So the deadlock continues and there appears to be little hope of removing it in the near future.

19. All of you, or most of you, will be coming to Delhi soon to attend a conference on food and rise in prices.[24] This is a matter of the utmost moment as our whole economy and future depend upon it. There are two major aspects of this problem. One is the policy of controls and how to give effect to it, the other is how to deal with people who flout and break our laws and rules, who indulge in black-marketing and who deliberately raise prices whenever they have the chance to do so. As regards controls, it must be clearly understood that, in existing circumstances, the principal controls cannot possibly be removed. Some people vaguely imagine that many of our troubles are due to controls. It is true that controls bring a measure of corruption. But it is equally true that to remove controls would be to invite disaster. Therefore, there must be no doubt on this point.

20. We live on the verge of a possible world war. If, to the misfortune of humanity, this comes, then it would be exceedingly difficult for us to import any foodstuffs. We shall have to make the best of what we have got or what we can grow. This is patent enough, but it requires repetition. We have got

23. Pakistan, besides seeking India's prior acceptance of the proposals, also insisted that the U.N. forces entrusted with the holding of a plebiscite should be assisted by the Pakistani and Indian forces on the basis of equality.

24. From 19 to 21 August 1950.

into the easy habit of getting food from abroad, even though that has cost us vast sums of money. When we cannot get it from abroad, what will we do? It is time that we considered this question from this point of view of a war emergency, and that all of us, whether we are producers or consumers, officials or non-officials, sellers or buyers, should become crisis-minded in this respect and deal with this situation in a spirit of urgency. The only possible way for us to pull through is to pool our resources and to apportion them justly. No State can function for itself and forget its neighbour. It is natural for each State to think of itself first. But if it does so to the injury of other States, then it is serving the cause of India badly. The surplus States must also tighten their belts like the others and give generously of their abundance to the other States. Effective procurement thus becomes essential. Some States have efficient systems of procurement, others have given little thought to this or, at any rate, have not produced results. That is not good enough. Indeed, even within a State we have seen scarcity while there is still food with people who hoard in the hope of profit. This kind of thing must be made impossible. You will no doubt discuss these matters at the conference in Delhi. I hope that that conference will not consist merely of lengthy speeches but will show an earnest approach by men determined to face and overcome this crisis at whatever cost. Many people think in terms of the general elections to come next year. Perhaps that is difficult to avoid. But failure to meet a crisis with all its dreadful consequences will affect those elections far more than any system of procurement, however hard that may be.

21. The other aspect of this problem relates not only to food but to other essential commodities and the rise in prices. Prices have recently risen chiefly because of rumours of war as also because of irresponsible statements made by some people. A Member of Parliament[25] stated the other day that famine was coming to Bengal. That statement had no justification. But it

25. Laxmi Kant Maitra, fearing repetition of 1943 famine conditions, wrote a number of articles in the Bengal press at this time.

produced its evil effect and immediately led to hoarding, thus bringing about a crisis. How are we to deal with these hoarders and anti-social dealers? Recent legislation has given authority to Parliament to deal with this matter and has laid down heavy penalties for offenders. What is more necessary, however, is some speedy method of catching and punishing those who offend. I trust that these methods will soon be evolved in consultation with you and other Chief Ministers.

22. The recent incidents in Gwalior, resulting in firing and the deaths of some students, naturally distressed many people. The demands of the students were trivial and there should have been no occasion for any conflict. But these demands were a mere excuse for trouble. This could be seen from the fact that a student demonstration developed later into communal attacks. We have thus to deal with situations which are apparently innocuous but which are perverted to wrong ends by mischievous people. Nevertheless, it is no credit to a government who have to resort to firing frequently. It shows a lack of awareness and inefficiency in dealing with a growing situation. There is going to be a full enquiry in the Gwalior affair.

23. The recent railway accident near Moghalsarai has been a most painful and distressing affair.[26] Sabotage is again feared though we do not yet know for certain. It is a terrible thing for any person to indulge in this kind of crime which means death and grievous injury to so many.

24. You will have learnt that three more Deputy Ministers have been appointed at the Centre.[27] It is possible that there might be some additions to them in the future.

25. The Election Commissioner has sent me a long note about his work. He had pointed out that some of the States are

26. See *ante*, p. 165.

27. On 11 August 1950, D.P. Karmarkar, Major-General Himatsinghji and S.N. Buragohain were appointed Deputy Ministers for Commerce, Defence, and Works, Mines and Power respectively.

moving very slowly and have not even yet sent their tentative proposals for dividing the State into units for constituencies. The Parliamentary Advisory Committee for each State has also been very dilatory. This is most unfortunate and I would beg of you to expedite the work of the Election Commission.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23

New Delhi
26 August, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

You will remember that at the Chief Ministers' Conference held in New Delhi recently,[1] there was some discussion as to how we should deal with people who act in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of supplies, that is those who hoard, raise prices or indulge in black-marketeering. Various penalties were suggested. But special attention was drawn to the power to keep such persons in detention. The Preventive Detention Act 1950 (No. IV of 1950) was passed by Parliament in February last. This deals with preventive detention and, among other things, it specially mentions that the Central Government or the State Government may (a) if satisfied with respect to any person that with a view to preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to (i) the defence of India, the relations of India with foreign powers, or the security of India, or (ii) the security of the State or the maintenance of public order, or (iii) the maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community, or (b) if satisfied with respect to any person who is a foreigner within the meaning of the Foreigners Act, 1946 (XXXI of 1946), that with a view to regulating his continued presence in India or with a view to making arrangements for his expulsion from India, it is necessary so to do, make an order directing that such person be detained.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. The conference to consider the food situation met under the chairmanship of Nehru from 19 to 21 August 1950.

It was the general opinion at the Chief Ministers' Conference that this power of detention should be exercised in dealing with people interfering with supplies, etc. I have little doubt that if we use this power of detention in this way, it would act as a powerful deterrent. I am also sure that public opinion would approve of it. The Courts have looked with some suspicion on detention orders and care should be taken that the necessities of the law are fulfilled. I feel that State Governments should consider this matter carefully and take steps under this Act wherever found necessary.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

24

New Delhi
1 September, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I imagine that India has set up some kind of a new record, not a record to be proud of. It is a record of disaster and calamity, one following another in quick succession, bringing sorrow and misery to vast numbers of human beings. Lack of rain in South India and elsewhere spoiled our crops, and then came an abundance of it, so much that heavy floods descended over vast areas. This has happened in Orissa, in Bihar and in Uttar Pradesh and thousands of villages have been almost washed away. We do not even yet know the full extent of this disaster in which millions of people are involved. Over and above all this, there was the great earthquake of Assam,[1] which experts tell us, is an even bigger one than the Bihar earthquake of the thirties.[2] This earthquake has not only shaken up the surface of the earth in Upper Assam, but has changed the physical features of that area. It is said that some hills have disappeared and rivers have changed their courses. People lie cut off and marooned and are difficult of access. We try to feed them by dropping food from the air. How far we succeed in reaching all of them, it is difficult to say. I am going to Assam in three days' time[3] to see personally this new shape of that corner of our country and to confer with our colleagues there as to what should be done in the way of relief and rehabilitation.

1. See *ante*, p. 165.

2. An earthquake of severe intensity on 15 January 1934 caused greater loss of life and widespread damage to property in Bihar.

3. From 5 to 8 September 1950.

2. Relief and rehabilitation. These words have become our daily and hourly companions during the last three years. We started a Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation nearly three years ago because of the vast number of refugees who came over to India. That stream of refugees has never wholly ceased and, as you know, there was another flood of them after February of this year in Bengal. That flood subsided later, but the stream continues. While we tackled with all our might, and, with only partial success, the great problem of the refugees from Western Pakistan, and thought that at last we were seeing some light, this fresh exodus has occurred in Bengal. And now, after we have battled with man's folly and fear and greed, we have to meet nature, red in tooth and claw. The prospect is overwhelming and yet it does no good to feel overwhelmed. And the only way to look upon it is to consider it a challenge to our manhood and our courage and capacity to work. Many of you, to whom I address this letter, are dealing with these problems of scarcity and flood and earthquake, and your hands are overfull. I can only assure you that the Central Government will give you every assistance that it can in meeting this difficult situation. We are forced to think, more than ever, that our only safety and security lie in pulling together and in the fullest co-operation between all the States and the Centre.

3. You came here some days ago for the Chief Ministers' Conference to consider the food situation and the rise in prices.[4] This conference, I felt, was different from the many conferences we have held previously. There was a sense of urgency, of crisis, of dangers ahead, which had to be met and met effectively, lest we perish, and, therefore, this conference was a business-like one and there was not much oratory, but quiet discussion and unanimous conclusions.[5] We realized,

4. See *ante*, p. 173.

5 To ensure self-sufficiency in food, the conference on 21 August called for increased food production on a war footing and streamlining of the system of procurement and distribution of foodgrains to check hoarding and black-marketing.

what of course we ought to have realised long ago, that the fullest co-ordination is necessary in regard to our food policy as well as our control policy, and no State can think of itself at the cost of others. We came to certain conclusions about food and we decided to take strong measures to check hoarding and profiteering in food as well as in certain other necessaries of life. It is our misfortune that the social sense is not strong among many of our people, and is specially not evident among the class that deals in these goods. This lack of social sense might be tolerated in normal times to some extent. But when crisis comes and large numbers of people suffer because of the anti-social activities of a few, then the time has come to cry a halt. That time has now come. In accordance with the decisions taken at the Chief Ministers' Conference, an ordinance is being issued soon.[6] This ordinance is seriously meant and has to be acted upon. If even this fails to prevent hoarding and black-marketing and consequent rise in prices, then other steps will have to be taken which may not be agreeable to many people. Laws and rules and regulations are made for the security and advancement of the people. If that security is challenged, progress stopped and in fact people lack more and more the very basic necessities of life, then there is something wrong about the law or the rule or the people who give effect to that law or rule. Certain minimum results have to be achieved at whatever cost. If they are not achieved under the existing laws, then laws have to be changed, because the very basis and object of those laws has failed.

4. I commend to you, therefore, with all earnestness the resolutions passed by the Chief Ministers' Conference and the subsequent steps taken by the Government of India in regard to food and rise in prices and the punishment of offenders. There should be no weakness or softness in our application of these

6. The Supply and Prices of Goods Ordinance (1950) of 2 September 1950 made issue of cash memos obligatory, fixed the maximum prices, as on 15 June, for certain articles like infant foods, razor blades, bulbs, and bicycles, and provided for drastic punishment of hoarders and profiteers.

new measures, for to show slackness in this grave matter is to exhibit our incompetence and our heedlessness to the public good. Many people think of the elections to come and are afraid of taking strong measures lest they become unpopular. But elections will be won or lost not because of any measures that we may take or not take, but because of the results achieved or not achieved. Every State, therefore, must gear itself up on a war basis to meet an emergency which is certainly not less than that of a war. It is a war that we fight for the good of our people against human indolence and greed. It is also a war against the disasters that nature has thrust upon us. It is with this sense of urgency and crisis and with an outlook of war in this respect that we must face these problems. I have little doubt that we can solve them if we bring the right spirit in our tasks.

5. Unhappily, even in this grave crisis, domestic and international, many of our people still think of and waste their energy over factional struggles. That is a greater weakness than any that hostile nature or a foreign enemy can bring about. I am not referring here in detail to the various steps that we have taken or that we or you have declared that we shall take. You have been informed of these separately.[7] What I wish to lay stress on is the development of that stern and unbending spirit which is a necessary prelude to any big and effective action, and also that spirit of mutual co-operation to fight a common peril.

6. I have spoken about all our domestic perils and disasters. They are bad enough. But in addition to that we have to face grave international perils. The Korean war goes on. It is confined to a relatively small country, but already it has resulted in all the horrors of war involving the butchery of vast numbers of human beings. Doctors fight for the patient, and meanwhile the patient dies. There was aggression in Korea and if we allow aggression to take place unchallenged, then we let

7. See *ante*, item 23.

loose evil forces all over the world. So, aggression has to be met and we gave our support to this decision of the United Nations. But that was only part of the answer and the real question as to what should be done and how, and what we shall aim at in Korea or beyond, remains yet unanswered. Our representative in the Security Council, Shri B.N. Rau, has tried valiantly to find some way out of this tangle with little success,[8] except that even our critics realize that India stands for peace and will not allow herself to be swept away by the passions that consume so many other countries today.

7. Korea is important in itself, a country of thirty million people, recently freed and now in a kind of death agony. But the importance of this war is much more because it is intimately connected with the Great Power conflicts of the world. Hence the fear that it may spread and involve the whole world in a common ruin. Probably there is not any great chance of this war spreading in the near future. But that does not in any way lessen the gravity of the situation.

8. Formosa has been very much in the picture lately.[9] We have felt all along, ever since the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, that to associate Formosa in any way with this was wrong and dangerous. It was a challenge to the new China which, according to us and all those who have recognized this

8. On 14 August 1950, Rau informally proposed that the Security Council appoint a committee of its non-permanent members to study all peace proposals and resolutions and submit its recommendations by a specified date. The proposal was abandoned because of the lack of support from members in the Security Council though it received lukewarm support from France, Yugoslavia, and Egypt. The United States' representative wanted the plan to be based on the resolution of 25 June which was not agreeable to Rau and the Soviet representative.

9. On 24 August 1950, the People's Republic of China informed the President of the Security Council that Truman's statement of 27 June to prevent "liberation of Taiwan" constituted an armed aggression on the territory of China and violation of the U.N. Charter. On 29 August, the Security Council rejected the Soviet draft proposal inviting the People's Republic of China to express its views on Taiwan.

China, had a right to Formosa, if not immediately then in the near future. Recent developments, including a statement[10] by General MacArthur[11] and President Truman's objection to it,[12] have indicated the two powerful tendencies in the U.S. There is the tendency of the militarists for war anyhow and anywhere. There is also the wiser tendency of the President and the State Department to check this madness. In China there is powerful reaction to all this and great popular excitement over Formosa. It is believed there that Formosa is just a base for the invasion of China and the fact that the remnants of the Kuomintang regime are still in Formosa and challenge China and are given protection, is a constant irritant to the Chinese Government and people. It is more than an irritant; it fills them with fear and when people are excited and afraid, anything may happen.

9. We have endeavoured with all earnestness and with such strength as we possess to counsel moderation to all the parties concerned. We have suggested to the U.S. that a clear declaration about Formosa would ease the situation. We have suggested to the Chinese Government that any injudicious or provocative step would be dangerous and should therefore be avoided. Fortunately for us, our *bona fides* and integrity in this matter are, I believe, recognized by all parties. But our influence is limited and the part of the peacemaker is always difficult.

10. General MacArthur in a statement on 27 August called for firm action by the United States against the attempts of People's China to take over Taiwan on the plea that Taiwan was vital to the Western Pacific defence system of the United States and its loss to the Communists would make war inevitable. Its repudiation by President Truman on the same day led to the withdrawal of the statement.

11. Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964). Commander-in-Chief of all American and Filipino forces in East Asia, 1941-51; after Japanese surrender in 1945 became Allied Commander of Japan till 1951; Commander of the U.N. forces in Korea, June 1950-April 1951.

12. Truman stated that his decision on June 27 to ask the United States fleet to defend Taiwan was motivated by the sole desire of taking "an impartial neutralizing action" against both Chinese Communists and the Nationalist forces and not with a view to acquire a special position for the United States.

10. We are convinced now as we were before that it is of vital importance that the Peoples' Government of China should be admitted to the United Nations. This demand has not emerged from the Korean war nor is it in any sense a bargain for something else. Nevertheless, it has a powerful effect on the Korean situation as it has on the international situation. The Security Council has thus far refused to admit China. Within three weeks the General Assembly of the United Nations will begin its session at Lake Success.[13] A strong delegation from China is on its way there and probably the most important question before the Assembly will be that of the admission of China. If the Assembly also refuses to admit China, then serious consequences for the United Nations are likely to follow. The United Nations may well cease to be what it has so far been. We are facing therefore a very critical session of the U.N.

11. At this session there are other very important matters also which affect us intimately. There will be the South African Indian issue and the Security Council will probably again consider Kashmir. Sir Owen Dixon's mission has failed. I explained at some length at a press conference as to what Sir Owen Dixon's proposals were and why we could not accept them.[14] In brief, Sir Owen tried his best to bring about an overall plebiscite in the whole state. We all accepted the principle, but we again got stuck on the conditions which were to govern the plebiscite. This idea of the overall plebiscite was therefore given up by Sir Owen Dixon and he proposed a partial plebiscite. This meant that certain areas of the state, where the people's opinion was perfectly clear and without doubt, might be allotted to India or Pakistan, as the case may be. In regard

13. From 19 September 1950.

14. On 24 August 1950, Nehru said that he was prepared to have the question examined on merits from any point of view, "practical, legal and constitutional." He described Dixon's proposal for replacement of Kashmir Government by an U.N. authority, pending the holding of a limited plebiscite, as "extraordinarily illogical", "an Alice in Wonderland business", and a proposal for "appeasement of the aggressor."

to other and doubtful areas, there should be a plebiscite. This meant in effect a partition of the state with a plebiscite in the Valley of Kashmir plus possibly some other minor areas. It was difficult for us to swallow this bitter pill because it meant accepting and acknowledging the success of aggression in some measure. Nevertheless, for the sake of peace we said that we would be prepared to consider this proposal. Pakistan would not even commit itself to that extent. Before we could discuss this proposal in any detail, we were informed that it was an essential prerequisite of the plebiscite in the Valley, that the present Government of Kashmir should be put out of commission and the Plebiscite Administrator or some other U.N. representative should have full administrative control over the Valley. This was to last about six months. This seemed to us an extraordinary condition. Not only was the aggressor given some areas of Kashmir state but in the Valley itself the existing Government was to be pushed out to please the aggressor and to give him greater chance of success in the proposed plebiscite. This was something to which we could never agree from any point of view. It would have been a gross betrayal of the Government and the people of Kashmir and a breach of the many pledges that we have given to them as well as to our people. It would have meant the final triumph of aggression. I expressed my great surprise to Sir Owen Dixon that such a proposal could possibly have been made.

12. Kashmir will now go to the Security Council[15] and there are indications that Pakistan is building up a big case about it as well as about other matters in dispute, such as canal waters.

13. So far as the evacuee property question is concerned, my colleague, Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar, is making another attempt to get an early solution. There is some faint hope that we might succeed. If we do not, we have decided to ask for arbitration. This would mean that each party appoints an arbitrator and they should choose a third.

15. The Security Council met on 26 September 1950 to consider Sir Owen Dixon's report.

14. In Bengal the situation remains much the same, though perhaps it will not be incorrect to say that there is a slight improvement. There is an improvement in the number of people coming away from East Bengal. Gradually the gap between those who come away and those who go back is lessening. The average of the last two weeks has been a net exodus from East Bengal of about 600 daily, that is, after subtracting those who are going back to East Bengal. This refers to non-Muslims only. Within East Bengal, conditions are still very far from satisfactory and we continue to receive complaints of dacoities, molestation of women, etc. The chief trouble appears to be that the lower rungs of the administration there do not function properly, either because of lack of competence or lack of will. The two Central Ministers, Shri Biswas and Dr. Malik, are doing good work. You must have seen the new batch of agreements in regard to the Bengal situation which have been arrived at between India and Pakistan.[16] This is one further step in the right direction.

15. The new Chinese Ambassador[17] is coming to New Delhi soon. He is accompanied by a large retinue. It is evident that the new Government of China attaches considerable importance to their Embassy in New Delhi and to their relations with India. Soon after the Chinese Ambassador comes here he will meet representatives of the Tibet Government in New Delhi.[18] India has been greatly interested in the future of Tibet. Our position has been that we recognize the suzerainty of China over Tibet, but at the same time we believe that Tibet should retain her full autonomy. Further that the special trade and other interests that India has in Tibet should continue. We have been trying for some months past to help a peaceful

16. See *ante*, pp. 170-171.

17. Yuan Chung-hsien (1906-1956). China's Ambassador to India, 1950-1956.

18. A Tibetan mission of seven members led by Tsepan Shakabpa arrived in India in April 1950 to make preliminary contacts with the representatives of the new Chinese Government.

settlement between China and Tibet.[19] We may well congratulate ourselves that our efforts had met with some success at least.[20] But the situation is still a difficult one and we must not imagine that the danger is over.

16. A trade delegation, headed by Shri P.A. Narielwala, is going to Indonesia to discuss trade between India and Indonesia.[21] We are anxious to develop trade and other contacts with Indonesia and in the international situation today there is a great deal in common between our approach and theirs.

17. Our Election Commissioner, Shri Sukumar Sen, is reported to have stated recently that it might be difficult to hold elections before October 1951.[22] I do not know if this report is correct, but I was much surprised to read it. I have often impressed upon you that it is of the highest importance that the general elections must be held in the first half of next year, at the latest by May 1951.[23] I see no reason why we should not do so if we so will. The real difficulties have come because some State Governments have not functioned with efficiency or speed in this matter. We should like you to appreciate that in case elections are further postponed, we will be accused of doing so deliberately and trying to avoid elections. Our reputation and our pledge are both important and we must therefore make every conceivable effort to stick to them. I would beg of you therefore to insist upon your Government

19. The Indian Ambassador to China suggested to the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister on 13 August 1950 that a peaceful settlement be worked out between China and Tibet.

20. In his note of 21 August 1950, the Chinese Foreign Minister recognized China's duty to utilize peaceful methods.

21. See *ante*, p. 161.

22. On 1 September 1950, Sen stated that if elections could not be held by March 1951, they would have to be postponed till the end of the monsoon season in October.

23. In fact they were held from October 1951 till April 1952.

doing everything to expedite the preparations for the general elections keeping in view all the time that these elections will be held about May 1951.

18. Bombay has had a strike in the textile mills for many days.[24] Yesterday, there was some kind of a general strike in sympathy with the textile workers.[25] Workers have a right to strike and they guard that right zealously. But a weapon can be used for good purpose or bad. Any strike today which interferes with vital production and which creates conflict and ill will is a very serious matter, and should only be indulged in if no other way is open to secure justice and the issues are very serious. I confess that I am not at all satisfied that there was adequate reason for this strike from any point of view. The matter in dispute is a bonus and industrial courts and tribunals are considering it in appeal. To make the workers and the country generally suffer for something that can at best be a matter of prestige seems to me an irresponsible approach to a serious question. Probably the reason behind this is more political than any other. In any event, the result has been not only great loss to the country and the workers, but further estrangement and ill will. If the community has to surrender to every such challenge, then there can be no peace in this country. So, with all my sympathy for the cause of workers, I have greatly regretted the step that many of them took in Bombay. At the same time, it is not enough for us to criticize or condemn others. Why is it that we cannot control a situation like this and have to resort to the coercive apparatus of the State? Our word and our advice should go much further than it does today in convincing the workers or others of what they should do or should not do. This again is significant evidence of the gulf that is growing up between the Government and certain

24. The strike from 14 August 1950 was organized by the Socialist-controlled Mill Mazdoor Sabha to protest against the wage and bonus award announced by the Bombay Industrial Court on 8 July 1950. It lasted sixty three days and involved about 200,000 millhands out of the total work force of 225,000.

25. The strike was organized by over fifty unions controlled by the Socialists and thirty two unions controlled by the Communists.

sections of the community. Normally, it would have been the function of the Congress to bridge this gulf. But the Congress is busy with its own internal troubles and elections,[26] and so the initiative passes to others.

19. I have dealt with the food and connected situations in the early part of this letter. There is a great deal of distress in India. At the same time, I have no doubt at all that conditions in Burma or Indonesia are generally much worse than in India. Why is it that we do not hear so much shouting or complaint from those countries as we do in India? Have we become so soft that we cannot put up with hard conditions? If there is scarcity of sugar, there follows a tremendous uproar, and we are compelled to import large quantities of sugar at heavy cost from abroad. Yet, during wartime and after, most countries of Europe had very little sugar and this was strictly rationed. There was no shouting or complaint there. People accepted the hard facts of life at that time in a disciplined way. In India, the slightest mishap leads to an outcry and condemnation of Government. It is open to people to criticize or condemn Government, but they should always remember that any action of theirs should not be such as to run down the country or to make a bad situation worse. People talk of famine and starvation. There may be some slight truth here and there in these cries, but there is a great deal of exaggeration. What is worse, scare and panic are created which do great injury. Partly this is due to a desire on the part of certain groups and parties to make political capital against Government. Partly it seems to be due to some inner weakness, lack of discipline and lack of social sense. This is an important matter for us to consider because strength comes from inside us and is not external to us. If we lose that inner strength, then nobody can help us.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

26. Factionalism and indiscipline were increasing in the Congress party and influenced the elections of the delegates to the annual session and of the President of the party.

25

New Delhi
11 September, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

I have already drawn your attention more than once to the necessity of swift and stern action against hoarders, black-marketeering and the like. I have pointed out to you the provisions of the recent ordinance as well as of the Preventive Detention Act. This last Act clearly lays down that people can be kept in detention for interfering with essential supplies.

2. One Chief Minister informs me that in the view of his Law Department this is not legally possible. It is said that hoarding and black-marketeering is not interference with essential supplies. I confess I do not understand this argument and, indeed, consider it quite wrong. Even if there was something in that argument, it is for the courts to decide and not for us to admit our helplessness in such a vital matter.

3. I cannot understand how it can possibly be said, either from the point of view of the law or of common sense, that hoarding and black-marketeering can neither of them be considered to be an interference with essential supplies. I should think it is the exact reverse of it, that they are obvious and patent interference of this kind. In any event, we have to decide whether we as a Government in the Centre and in the provinces can effectively deal with this situation or are completely helpless in the matter. A Government that confesses defeat against the evil-doer ceases to hav any justification for

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

functioning. This is a serious matter and I would draw your particular attention to it. We must function swiftly and effectively and, if necessary, take risks in the matter so far as the law is concerned. The public should know that we are earnest and serious and are prepared to take action. If the law comes in the way, we must immediately set about changing the law, but I do not think the law comes in the way. It is clear enough.

4. It is of the utmost importance that our ordinance should be followed by such or similar action. Also that if goods are frozen, they should not be kept frozen but distributed as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

26

New Delhi
14 September, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing this letter to you a day earlier than usual. This is so because I am going to Bombay on my way to Nasik. Probably you will be going to Nasik Congress [1] also and we shall meet there. Nevertheless, I feel I should send you my usual fortnightly letter.

2. A few days ago I sent you a brief letter again drawing your attention to the Preventive Detention Law which I suggested might be used against hoarders, black-marketeers, etc., who interfered with the maintenance of supplies.[2] I did so because one of the Chief Ministers informed me that in the opinion of his Law Department this law did not apply and nothing of this kind could be done unless there was special legislation. On the face of it, this seemed to me a wrong interpretation. However, I referred the matter to our Law Ministry and they have given me a clear opinion on this subject. According to this, there can be no doubt that this law does apply to such cases. The confusion has arisen because reference was made to something that happened before the 26th January 1950, when the law was different. There can be no doubt therefore that hoarding and black-marketing do interfere with the maintenance of supplies

1. At its session from 20 to 21 September, the Nasik Congress passed resolutions on foreign policy, communalism and Indo-Pakistan relations, foreign possessions in India, displaced persons, the economic programme, khadi and village industries and the Congress Constitution.

2. See *ante*, item 25.

and services essential to the community. And any person interfering with this maintenance of supplies, etc., can be proceeded against. I am laying particular stress on this matter because I feel that, with all the goodwill in the world, we have been slow in taking action in this matter. The law is there and no further legislation is necessary. If we fail, it is our failure, not the law's.

3. We have taken strong action frequently for the maintenance of public order. We have not hesitated to put people under detention or to proceed against them in law courts if they are offenders against public order. We have not shown the same earnestness in dealing with other anti-social activities, such as those indulged in by hoarders, black-marketeers and those who indulge in corrupt practices. There is a general opinion in the country that swift and stern action should be taken. Whenever any reference is made to such action, it meets immediately with an eager public response. Perhaps our whole social structure and legal system have not been fashioned to meet such emergencies. If so, we shall have to think seriously of changing that structure or machinery. Failure in controlling a situation in regard to rise in prices has disastrous results and in addition will bring discredit to Government. I would therefore draw your particular attention again to this matter. Above all, we must be very careful not to allow anything to happen which may be interpreted as a surrender to vested interests at the cost of the general community.

4. The international situation continues to be very grave. It may be said, however, that the prospect of the spread of war beyond Korea has receded, but it must be remembered that any incident or new turn in international affairs might bring the danger much nearer. The United Nations General Assembly is meeting next week at Lake Success, and some of these vital matters--Korea. Formosa, China, etc. are bound to come up there in some form or other. Perhaps the most important question will be the admission of the People's

Government of China to the U.N. The future of the U.N. depends, to a large extent, on the answer that will be given to this question. So far as we are concerned, we are convinced that the new China must be admitted to the U.N. and further that every delay in this deepens the crisis. I think that most countries realize this. The United Kingdom has come to this conclusion also, so far as we know.[3] But, opposition from the U.S.A. continues.

5. Two incidents happened recently round about Korea. One was the alleged bombing of Manchurian territory by American aircraft.[4] The other was the shooting down of a Soviet military plane by American bombers.[5] Both these were very serious incidents. We do not know the exact facts and contradictory versions have been put forward. It was proposed in the U.N. Security Council that some kind of a Commission should go to Manchuria to investigate the charge.[6] India and Sweden were the two countries mentioned in this connection. We were agreeable to shoulder this responsibility together with Sweden.

3. During the talks on 14 September between the representatives to the United Nations of the U.S.A., Britain and France, the British representative explained that Britain would support China's entry into the United Nations as otherwise China would be forced into joining the Soviet camp. The U.S. representative did not share Britain's fears.

4. The Chinese Foreign Minister charged the United States with bombing of Manchurian territory on 27 August and asked the United Nations to get the occupation of Korea by U.S. forces vacated and find a peaceful solution of the problem. Denying these charges on 29 August, the U.S. representative maintained that their action in Korea had the sanction of the United Nations and the question of bombing could be verified by a Commission appointed by the Security Council.

5. The U.S. informed the U.N. Secretary-General on 5 September that the U.N. fighter patrol had shot down on the previous day a Soviet bomber aircraft when it was approaching and opening fire on a U.N. naval formation off the west coast of Korea. The Soviets denied this charge on the following day and alleged that it was an unarmed plane on a routine training flight which had been shot down.

6. The United States moved a resolution on the subject in the Security Council on 7 September 1950.

The question then arose that the Chinese Government should be allowed to present its case before the Security Council. This seemed a perfectly legitimate demand, quite apart from China's admission to the U.N. Here was a complaint being considered by the Security Council and it was proper that the complainant should attend. But we were greatly surprised that the resolution was not passed although a majority voted for it, this majority including India, U.K., France and Norway.[7] The U.S.A. opposed it stoutly [8] and just managed to prevent its passing. I confess that I do not understand how from any viewpoint of law and commonsense, this opposition could be justified. It has created a bad impression among many people. The U.S. Government, in their intense dislike of the People's Government of China, are often acting in a manner which cannot be justified.

6. Since I wrote to you last, I have been to Assam and have visited some of the earthquake-affected areas. I have already made statements about this and I shall not repeat them here except to say that the need for relief is urgent.[9] We do not yet know the full extent of the damage done because we have not reached the hill regions. Probably part of Tibet was badly affected also. But, beyond that we have no news. A curious fact has been noticed. Many uprooted trees are being carried by the rivers in Assam. Some of these trees are not to be found

7. The Soviet Union's resolution in the Security Council on 11 September failed to secure seven affirmative votes.

8. The U.S. representative while conceding the right of any State to be heard by the Security Council, argued that this particular case had legalistic implications as it was not clear who represented China. He argued also that there was no dispute between parties as the United States had agreed to the appointment of a Commission for an on-the-spot investigation and to pay compensation if the allegations were proved. He suggested that the U.N. should try to ascertain facts rather than take notice of allegations and counter-allegations.

9. In a broadcast to the nation on 9 September, Nehru made an appeal for generous public contributions to the Governor's Relief Fund. He also warned profiteers against exploiting the situation which could be faced if the people tried to extend help to the sufferers and kept up their morale.

anywhere in Assam and it is concluded that they are coming down from Tibet.

7. The Assam earthquake has been a very big and serious affair and it would take a considerable time for us to repair the damage done. I have already told you of the floods in Bihar, U.P., and Orissa. You have to add Punjab to this list of flood-stricken provinces.

8. This earthquake and floods have made a big difference to our food position because many storehouses full of grain have been swept away and cultivated areas have been washed out completely. We have therefore to be doubly careful about food. We have to avoid waste and we have to procure as much as we can get. We are trying to import some foodgrains also. Generally speaking, the food position is much easier in West Bengal, Bihar and Madras.

9. During the last few weeks, a continuous and virulent propaganda has been carried on in Pakistan in regard to Kashmir. The press is full of it and leaders of Pakistan refer to this question almost daily.[10] Choudhri Zafrullah Khan [11] has made many statements containing a tendentious account of what has happened.[12] It is evident that every attempt is being made by Pakistan to build up a case against India, not only in regard to Kashmir, but other matters also. Presumably, an attempt will be made to put this case in the Security Council in the near future.

10. For example, Abdul Qayyum Khan had said on 1 September, "come what may, Pakistan will never allow India to deprive three million Mussalmans of Jammu and Kashmir state of their birthright of freedom either by force or by fraud." He charged the Indian Government with going back on the promise of plebiscite.

11. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 362.

12. Zafrullah Khan accused India on 7 September 1950 of "rejecting every solution regarding Kashmir proposed by every impartial, independent and international opinion." Rejection of Dixon's proposals by Nehru "can only mean that either Pandit Nehru thinks everybody else is foolish or he himself is deluded." On 11 September, he repeated the charge and blamed India for reported failure of Dixon's mission.

10. It is often stated in Pakistan that we have gone back upon our promises in regard to Kashmir. This is completely untrue. We have not resiled from a single promise and we are prepared to proceed on the basis of all our admissions and promises. We are all agreed about a plebiscite. The real difference has arisen about conditions governing the plebiscite. In regard to this, we have, right from the beginning, made clear what we considered the minimum conditions necessary. We adhere to that position now. The last breakdown was due to the fact that Pakistan was not agreeable to any partial plebiscite and we were not agreeable, on any account, to the removal of Sheikh Abdullah's Government there. To agree to this would mean a great betrayal on our part and a breach of many promises made. It would have been a direct encouragement and reward to the aggressor. Instead of punishing the aggressor, we were asked to reward them immediately and to create conditions for a plebiscite which were manifestly unfair to us and in favour of Pakistan. We could never agree to the removal of the legally established Government in Kashmir, merely because Pakistan wants to push it out.

11. I have referred above to the attempt being made by Pakistan to build up a case against us. In this connection they wrote to us about the canal waters dispute.[13] They wanted a reference to be made to the International Court at The Hague. We have never refused a reference to a tribunal. What we have said in the past has been that a technical survey of the whole Indus region was necessary before we could finally decide this question. Pakistan has not agreed to this. We have now in our reply again stressed this survey which, in any event, is essential.[14] We have further suggested that we are perfectly prepared to have a tribunal to which this matter might be referred. We have not agreed to The Hague Court as this was manifestly most inconvenient as well as costly. It is difficult to imagine how The Hague Court can deal with such a matter

13. Liaquat Ali Khan wrote to Nehru on 23 August 1950.

14. Nehru's letters to Liaquat Ali Khan on 12 and 15 September 1950.

adequately from a distance. They would have to send out their own commissions. Our suggestion is that a tribunal should be established consisting of two judges of the highest standing from India and two similar judges from Pakistan.

12. We have further pointed out that the evacuee property problem is a far more urgent one and more full of dangerous possibilities than the canal waters dispute. We have suggested that this evacuee property problem should also be referred to the same tribunal.

13. Another serious railway accident occurred near Gurdaspur recently in which the Kashmir Mail was involved.[15] The casualty toll was heavy. We are, all of us, greatly distressed by the many railway disasters that have taken place this year. It may be that they are due to sabotage, as is alleged, but we must find a remedy for this kind of thing.

14. Master Tara Singh[16] has been arrested[17] and will be tried soon on account of some speeches that he has delivered. He has been acting with complete irresponsibility and saying the wildest things. We were reluctant to arrest him again, but he made that impossible. There has not been any marked reaction anywhere to his arrest.

15. I have written to you frequently about the necessity of having our general elections at the latest by May next year. This was easily possible and yet is possible if we work hard. I am sorry to say, however, that some State Governments do not appear to appreciate this urgency and perhaps imagine that they can prolong the preliminaries for as long as they like. A few of them have even said that they cannot be ready by April-

15. The accident on 3 September caused by heavy floods, resulted in the deaths of 11 persons and injuries to 54.

16. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 299.

17. He was arrested on 7 September on charges of delivering objectionable speeches in July.

May next. It would almost appear that there is a deliberate desire not to have these elections fairly early next year. All kinds of obstructions have been placed in the way of preparation. Delimitation Committees appointed by the Speaker have taken their work in a most leisurely manner and some of them have yet done no real work. In spite of all this, I want to tell you that we are going to make every effort to have the elections in April or May next year and I would beg of you to see to it that your part of the work is done in good time.

16. My colleague, Shri Sri Prakasa, paid a visit to Kabul to attend the Independence Day celebrations.[18] He was welcomed there in the most friendly manner. As you know, there has been a great deal of tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan goes on accusing us of inciting Afghanistan.[19] There is not an atom of truth in this and we have not given the slightest help to Afghanistan in any shape. It is perfectly true that we sympathize with much that is said in Afghanistan, though we do not agree with all that they claim. We have, however, kept perfectly clear of this dispute except for advising moderation and avoidance of war. Our desire not to interfere with the affairs of other countries is evident from the fact that we have been more or less silent about something which has pained us greatly and which continues to distress us. This is the imprisonment of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan[20] and Dr. Khan Saheb[21] as well as large numbers of their colleagues. What distresses us most is our incapacity to help these brave soldiers of Indian freedom. A great deal of trouble is brewing in the Frontier, but I do not think war will come out of it.

18. On 24 August 1950.

19. On 7 September 1950, Zafrullah Khan alleged that the issue of Pakhtoonistan was "actively mooted by the late Mahatma Gandhi", and "India was committed to it, which was also supported by Afghanistan."

20. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 279.

21. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 279.

17. The Tibetan Mission has been here in Delhi and will be seeing the new Chinese Ambassador.[22] Probably they will have to go to Peking to carry on negotiations. We have advised them, as we have advised the Chinese Government, that it is highly desirable that a peaceful settlement should take place.

18. Our Finance Minister, Shri Chintaman Deshmukh, is attending the World Bank meetings in Paris. Among other things, this Bank has been considering the question of the exchange value of the Pakistani rupee. The latest report is that these talks have not thus far yielded any report and the discussion has been postponed. I might inform you that we have decided to impose exchange control on financial transactions with Pakistan, as soon as the rate of exchange between Indian and Pakistani currencies is settled.

19. The situation in Bengal exhibits no marked change, although there is a slow improvement. We have received full reports from our Central Minister and from other sources, which indicate this gradual improvement. At the same time, the law and order position continues to be bad and frequent reports come to us of dacoities and thefts and sometimes of molestation of women. Recent reports indicate that the dacoities take place sometimes in Muslim houses also. It is clear that the whole economic and social structure of East Bengal has been completely shaken up and the administration there is not strong enough to deal with the new situation that has arisen. To some extent the administration is functioning better than previously. The Minority Commission and district minority boards and municipal boards have, however, not been functioning well.

22. The Tibetan delegation, when it called on the Chinese Ambassador in Delhi on 30 September 1950, was advised to proceed to Beijing for further negotiations. The Chinese Ambassador declined to discuss with it the question of future relations between Tibet and China as he was not empowered to conclude any agreement.

20. We have gathered fairly accurate figures about the migrations between East and West Bengal. Our figures for Assam are not accurate. Even in regard to West Bengal, while we have reliable figures for the movements of people by train, river, steamer and air, we have not got any reliable data about those who crossed the border by foot either way. It is clear that a considerable number, especially near the border, crossed the border by foot. Our rough estimate of migrants from East to West Bengal on foot has thus far been three lakhs. The West Bengal Government has now revised this estimate and put it at 13 lakhs. I suppose that any figure for this movement must be largely a guess work. The present position is that there is a net excess of about 600 persons a day among Hindus coming from East Bengal to West Bengal and there is a net excess of about 1,000 Muslims a day returning to West Bengal from East Bengal. These figures are not very satisfactory but they are certainly an improvement on the past figures.

21. Our Rehabilitation Minister has been asking for the registration of claims by displaced persons so that these might be subsequently verified. I have already written to you on this subject.[23] This is obviously necessary for any talks we may have with Pakistan or in the event of this matter going to a tribunal. Government have also stated that displaced persons from Western Pakistan will be given proportionate compensation from the amounts recovered from their properties left in West Pakistan. There has been a good deal of rather vague talk about compensation. It should be remembered that this compensation relates only to such amounts recovered from West Pakistan and will be given *pro rata* to those whose claims have been verified. Apart from this, it is Government's duty to help in rehabilitation. Government cannot undertake to compensate from the public funds all those who have suffered. Hence the use of the word compensation should be limited to recoveries from Pakistan and for the rest the word rehabilitation is the proper one. There have also been even

23. See *ante*, p. 171.

looser talks about a capital levy. Such a levy affects our whole social and economic structure. One can think of it, if necessary, in regard to large-scale development plans which would ultimately raise standards in India. One might even have thought of it for large-scale rehabilitation. But it seems to me completely unjust to refer to it in connection with compensation as such.

22. The war in Korea is being carried on and, from all accounts, is a ghastly affair. Accounts of American correspondents have shown what terrible damage is being inflicted and the cruelty on both sides. American and allied forces are confined to the south-eastern tract of Korea. They have thus far held their grounds there. The longer they can manage to do so, the stronger they are likely to become, because of reinforcements which are being hurried to them from the United States.

23. I have just received a report from our Intelligence Bureau on the subject of Hindu and Muslim refugee traffic between East Pakistan and West Bengal. This report gives certain factual data obtained from a check made on Hindu and Muslim refugee traffic. The report is a very detailed one giving figures for each district, that is whether they are old or young, men, women or children, professions, purpose of coming or going, etc. It indicates how many were normal passengers, how many smugglers and how many real migrants.

24. I am not sending you the full report which is rather voluminous. But I am sending you two notes[24] which give an analysis of the results obtained. You will notice that a great majority of migrants, both Hindus and Muslims, belong to the poorer classes or the lower middle class.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

24. Not printed.

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New Delhi
27 September, 1950

My dear Chief Minister*,

You must have followed with interest the proceedings of the Nasik session of the Congress. This session was important in many ways and the resolutions that were passed there deserve particular attention. Some of these resolutions are guides for not only Congress policy, but governmental policy. Indeed, they are in the nature of mandates.

2. I would specially refer you to two resolutions. One on communalism and Indo-Pakistan relations [1] and the other on economic policy.[2] These two relate to our day to day problems, which every Government in India and every officer of that Government has to face. It is therefore necessary that these resolutions should be carefully studied by every Government

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. The resolution, while endorsing the Indo-Pakistan Agreement of 8 April 1950, urged that all disputes between India and Pakistan "should be considered as political problems between the two countries and should be treated as such." It called upon the Governments to treat minorities with "full justice and fairness" and reiterated that India being a democratic country, all its citizens must enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

2. Declaring the establishment of a welfare state to be the Congress objective, the resolution underlined the need for planned development of industry and agriculture so as to secure self-sufficiency in food production, fuller utilization of the industrial potential and employment opportunities for all, on land and in industry, including small and village industries. The resolution also endorsed the policy of controls over the sale and distribution of essential commodities.

and its officers. They do not contain much that is new. Indeed, they are a reiteration of our own policy. But it was necessary for this emphasis to be given to our own policy in the new context of things and, more especially, because it has sometimes been challenged. So far as Congressmen are concerned, and it is they who are responsible for our governments, Central and provincial, they are bound by the directions issued by the Nasik Congress. Those directions are not only specific on some matters but, what is more important, lay down a method of approach to our problems which must be understood and acted upon.

3. In regard to economic policy, the Congress, as was natural, has laid stress on planning and welcomed the formation of the Planning Commission in the Centre. There has, unfortunately, sometimes been some criticism of the Planning Commission and some lukewarm regard for it. I am surprised at this because if there is anything to which Congress has attached importance, it is to planning. The Nasik Congress has again made this clear. I am quite convinced that without a planned approach we are doomed to failure. As for the particular Planning Commission that we have appointed, it is, I feel sure, as good as any could have been appointed. It is to be a small body, or else it becomes a conference which discusses a great deal without doing anything. But, though small, it consults large numbers of other people at the Centre and in the States. I am glad to say that it has generally received full co-operation. But on rare occasions this has been lacking. No department of Government should refrain from giving the fullest co-operation to the Planning Commission. It can only do so if it does not believe in the basic policy both of the Congress and the Government. That is to say, it can only do so if it goes in a different direction from that of others. That surely is most undesirable. It must be remembered that our economic policy is going to be a planned one with all that this means. There is no other choice and no other way. Planning means co-ordination all over India and not separate bits of planning, and the main directing agency for planning will be the Planning Commission of the Centre.

4. After a long debate and much argument,[3] Congress has definitely declared in favour of controls for essential articles so long as they are in short supply. This must put an end to all argument on this question. One of the reasons why we have failed in making controls successful is the continous talk in some circles that controls are going to be removed. This talk does not achieve the result aimed at by it, but merely undermines to some extent the system of controls and weakens it. If it is fully realized that controls are going to continue, then we must work to that end fully and in co-operation with each other.

5. The main criticism of controls is that they lead to corruption. We have talked a great deal about removing corruption both in controls and in certain other activities of Government such as licences, imports, etc. Our success in tackling this problem has been very limited and certainly we cannot congratulate ourselves on it. What are we going to do? Are we to confess failure? Surely not. We must find out why we have not succeeded more. We pass laws and ordinances and nothing much emerges out of them. When we take some action, the courts often nullify that action. If the law is not strong enough or effective enough, we must think in terms of changing it. Obviously, we cannot accept a position which shows us to such disadvantage. No Government can plead inability to deal with vital social evils. If it is incapable of dealing with them, then it has ceased to perform one of the main duties entrusted to it.

6. We should examine our laws wherever necessary. But, I have a feeling that apart from the laws, we have not set about this matter with the same earnestness and zeal with which we have tackled some other problems. Vested interests come in the way and our machinery is not competent enough. If the

3. When a vote was taken on the paragraph on controls in the economic policy resolution in the plenary session on 21 September, 190 members were in favour and 117 against.

machinery is not good, it must be changed. The object of that machinery is to yield results and not to tell us that it is beyond its power to do anything.

7. Our controls machinery took shape in the course of the last World War. It was neither good nor honest. It was a temporary expedient of the British Government. We have continued it more or less. We have to examine now its efficiency and to remove people from it who are not efficient or not honest. A smaller and more efficient machinery would yield much greater results.

8. This applies to all our machinery of Government which deals with the public and which is liable to succumb to temptation. There must be a measure of ruthlessness in dealing with such matters. The public services are not an end in themselves, but are meant to serve the public. If their service is not good, or is positively harmful, then they have to be changed.

9. Our public services in the higher grades are generally good and efficient and it is unfortunate that the sins of a few should taint the many. It is therefore in the interest of the public services as well as of the public generally to remove the taint.

10. Whatever course we may adopt, we shall be judged by the result. Our excuses, however good they might be, will help us little. I shall be grateful to you if you will consider these matters with your colleagues in your Government from the point of view that I have suggested. We have to meet the challenge and the sooner we meet it effectively, the better.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
1 October, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Since I wrote to you last, the Nasik Congress has taken place. It has laid down national, international[1] and economic policies for the country.[2] Answerable as we are to the Congress organization, these resolutions of the Nasik Congress are in the nature of mandates to us which must be followed. I would, therefore, invite your particular attention to them and, more particularly, to the resolution on communalism and economic policy. I have already written to you separately about these resolutions.[3]

2. As you know, for a variety of reasons, the Nasik Congress attracted a great deal of attention all over the country.[4] For Congressmen it was of course important but others also realized the significance of this session of the Congress. There is a common criticism that the Congress passes its resolutions and then Congressmen forget about them or ignore them. Perhaps there is some truth in this. If that is so, then the sooner we falsify this assumption, the better. No organization can continue to live in an atmosphere of unreality and hypocrisy which must follow from action being divorced from precept and resolution. It is, therefore, of great importance for us to imbibe not only the words, but the spirit of the Nasik Congress

1. The resolution on international affairs approved the policy of non-alignment, the stand taken by the Government on Korea and the demand for the admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations.

2. See *ante*, p. 204.

3. See *ante*, pp. 204-206.

4. There had been speculations that the Congress under Purushottam Das Tandon would not support Nehru.

resolutions, and to make our administrative and other activities conform to them. This is not merely a matter for Ministers to do, but also for the whole administrative structure to understand and follow up. The Congress resolutions are clear enough about general policies and the approach to vital problems. They could not be detailed. It is for Government to apply them in detail as circumstances warrant. But, in any event, the spirit behind them and the general outlook should be strictly adhered to, both from the point of view of the Congress and the Government.

3. Our Cabinet has decided to summon the next session of Parliament for Tuesday, November 14th, 1950.

4. I have often written to you on the subject of the general elections to come and expressed my anxiety that we must hold them at the latest by April-May next. There has been a great deal of delay in taking the preliminary steps. The latest example of delay has been in the work of committees for delimiting constituencies.[5] This has held up the work of publication of electoral rolls. We have now decided to get over this difficulty by permitting publication of electoral rolls even if constituencies have not been fixed. Any other course would have made it almost impossible for us to hold the elections in the first half of next year. As it is, according to law, constituencies cannot be finalized till Parliament has passed further electoral legislation. This means sometime in December. That would be too late. Therefore, what we propose to do now is to allow the Election Commission to publish electoral rolls on the basis of territories where constituencies have not been fixed. We would prefer, of course, to do this according to constituencies and we shall do so wherever possible. In order to give effect to this a brief ordinance will be issued within a few days and a notification will follow it.

5. On 23 September, Nehru urged all Parliamentary Advisory Committees to expedite work on delimitation of constituencies because of its "importance and urgency."

5. You will appreciate how earnest we are to expedite elections by this step that we are taking. I seek your co-operation in this work. If we can get even the preliminary lists of constituencies by the middle of October, this will help. In any event, we shall go ahead with the publication of electoral rolls.

6. The food situation continues to be serious, although there has been some improvement in many States.[6] The next two months are likely to be difficult. We have reluctantly decided to import considerable quantities of foodgrains from abroad. The U.S.A. have offered us a large quantity (4,27,431 tons of *milo*) at concessional price.[7] They are also sending six tons of emergency relief supplies for relief of distress in Assam. Our Food Secretary has been sent to the U.S.A. and Canada to negotiate for the purchase of foodgrains. Rice has been ordered from various places.[8] We hope that all these steps that we are taking will meet our present difficulties. But the basic problem remains and it is a matter of great distress for us that large numbers of our people should be living on what might almost be called a starvation diet and which certainly is below health standards. Recently, there has been trouble in Hyderabad state on account of the food situation and food riots have taken place.[9]

7. We have laid great stress on the Grow-More-Food Campaign and I think a good deal of progress has been made in the past year or more. Most States are paying attention to bringing additional land under cultivation. There is talk of tractors and other machinery being used. All this is good

6. For example, in Madhya Bharat, Pepsu, Rajasthan and West Bengal.

7. The price charged from India was to be $ 1.40 for 100 lbs of *milo* as against the prevailing market rate in the United States of $ 1.87.

8. India purchased 1,70,000 tons of rice from Burma, 60,000 tons from Egypt, and 65,000 tons from East Bengal. An agreement was also signed on 3 January 1951 for purchase of rice from China against supply of jute.

9. Looting of granaries belonging to the Government and the zamindars became widespread in Telengana at this time.

though I should like to utter a warning as regards the sudden use of large machines. Past experience has shown that we have not fully profited by the many tractors that we purchased at a heavy price. Tractors, like all machines, not only require trained personnel to work them but even more so, a proper organization for service and repairs and a bent of mind in the people using them. It is not possible to impose with success a tractor on people utterly unused to them. This applies more specially to big tractors. Small ones are easy to work and to understand.

8. We have got too much into the habit of thinking in terms of big machines and our importing them from outside. Personally I am all for machines and I am convinced that our methods of production should be as efficient and as up-to-date as possible. Any method which is inefficient and which does not produce adequate results cannot long survive even with State help. I welcome, therefore, the use of the tractor and other machinery in our agricultural operations. But if that is to be used, it must be used properly and with knowledge and experience behind it. A machine requires understanding and loving care. If it is misused, it will not function.

9. In our river valley and other schemes also we have to obtain from abroad large-scale machinery. This is inevitable and yet I feel that many types of machines can be made in India if we gave thought and energy to this matter. We follow the easier path of paying dollars and getting them from abroad. We forget that our resources are limited; we forget also how Japan industrialized herself without importing much in the way of big machines. Right from the commencement, Japan tried to build her own machines and later succeeded remarkably.

10. Another factor has to be borne in mind. When we have to buy expensive machinery from abroad or to give contracts, we have to be particularly careful that we get the most for our money and that no opportunity is given for individuals to make private profit out of these big transactions. I say this because.

instances have come to my notice when such private profit has been alleged. We have, therefore, to take particular care in checking this abuse.

11. Coming back to food production, while I welcome additional lands being brought under cultivation, I am convinced that the real way to increase our food production is by increasing the yield from the land that is already cultivated. Even a ten per cent increase in this, and this should not be difficult, would more than solve our food problem. Our present yields are terribly low and a little intelligent effort could increase them.

12. Then there is the question of cultivated land deteriorating and, in some cases, actually reverting to semi-desert conditions. What steps are we taking to check this? We think of the positive side of adding new land to cultivation, but not of stopping the reverse process from proceeding, just as we plant new trees, which is good, but do not stop the felling of old trees which are valuable.

13. I suppose that with the coming of October we may have some momentary relief from the possibility of additional floods. We have had far more than our share of these calamities during the last three months and are now very slowly recovering. As you know, the latest to be hit, and hit badly, were Punjab and Kashmir. They have suffered a great deal of loss and deserve every help. In Assam the rivers are still in spate and it is not easy to cross them. Our Army and Air Force have done excellent work there even at some risk. We are sending specially selected officers to the Assam Government to help them both in their normal and in their abnormal work. Assam is a province which was badly neglected in the past and yet is most important today for a variety of reasons. It deserves every kind of assistance, though ultimately a province grows up because of its own efforts and the hard work it can do for its own progress. The earthquake and after have shaken up Assam. At the same time, I believe, it has done good in the sense that it has roused up the

people of Assam and made them realize that it is up to them to pull their province up. I am glad to say that money has been coming in continuously from all over India as well as abroad for relief and rehabilitation work in Assam. We have received some big donations and they are welcome. But most welcome of all have been petty donations from those who could ill spare them, as well as from children.

14. A few days ago, the great Muslim festival of *Id* took place and was celebrated by Muslims all over India.[10] I am glad to say that it passed off peacefully except for communal incidents in Lucknow and Bhagalpur in Bihar. These incidents were controlled quickly, but they made us realize that we have to be wary and vigilant all the time. There are mischief-makers about and people who wish to create trouble for political or like reasons. It is here that the importance of the Nasik Congress resolution on communalism comes in. Every communal incident in India is a stain on our record. Every District Magistrate should be made to realize that his reputation depends upon the avoidance of such incidents. It has been my experience during the last few years and more that a great deal depends in each district on the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police. If they are competent and right-minded, nothing wrong is likely to happen. But if they are not competent, or if they temporize with communal or anti-social elements, then trouble is bound to come some time or other. I think it would be a safe policy to put a black mark in the record of every district officer when a communal incident takes place and to inform him of this. The best of excuses are not good enough, just as all the reasons in the world which a defeated General may advance for his defeat are not good enough.

15. This takes me to the consideration of other anti-social activities, such as black-marketing, high prices, and corruption generally. Nothing distresses me more than the prevalence of these. They are bad of course in themselves, but for any

10. On 23 September 1950.

Government to be unable to deal with them is a confession of sheer impotence. Are we helpless before them? We pass laws and lay down stringent punishments. We punish also a number of people of low degree. But it is clear that the main offenders are not those petty folk. When we deal with Communist violence or with other types of violence, we are efficient enough and our actions are swift and stern. Can we not bring that energy and that will to achieve results in dealing with people who indulge in these anti-social activities of raising prices, black-marketing, etc.? I am convinced that these evils are far worse from the social as well as the practical point of view than any amount of Communist violence. They are worse because they themselves breed that violence and social disorder. Also they are more insidious and they corrupt the individual, the group, and the nation. They are the real enemies within our gates; others are open and avowed enemies, whom we can see and deal with.

16. I think in this matter too our officers should be made to appreciate that their good name is involved. They should be given every help and encouragement. If even then they cannot deal with a situation in the areas under their control, then they lack competence and others should be given charge. We have dealt with this question much too softly in the past. Innocent people should not suffer, but it is better that a few innocent suffer than that the public at large should suffer and our public and official life should be corrupted. I have often heard that when action is taken by an official against a prominent person, immediately people rush to him to save the alleged offender. Even Ministers are sometimes said to protect such persons; some Members of Legislatures also show anxiety in this matter. Obviously, officials cannot function if this kind of interference takes place in their activities. On the one side, we impress upon them to take action and then when action is taken, there is obstruction and attempts to stop it. Few things discredit Government more than a belief in the public that prominent offenders are shielded.

17. It is desirable for us to have especially trained and experienced officers in various departments. As they gain experience in the particular work, they add to their utility. While this is so, it is even more important for us to remember that an officer kept too long in a particular post may become stale and without any initiative. He will work in a routine way. If by any chance he is not quite straight, then it is all the worse for the Government and the public. If kept too long in a particular post of responsibility, there is a tendency to consider that post as a private preserve. It is, therefore, generally desirable for officers not to be kept in a particular post for more than three years at the most. Personally, I feel that the old practice of members of the Services not remaining too long at a time at the Centre is a good one. After some years at the Centre, they used to revert to the provinces, and thus came in more intimate contact with the people and their immediate problems. Here, in the tenuous atmosphere of Delhi, we live in a world apart.

18. The Bombay textile strike has continued now for six weeks.[11] Merits or demerits apart, this has been a major and tragic event. I think the workers and their advisers have been completely in the wrong in challenging a matter in appeal before a tribunal. If they succeed in such a strike, then the whole machinery of tribunals collapses and, indeed, Government practically collapses in so far as labour disputes are concerned. It is not a question of prestige for Government. No Government should think of its own prestige when a matter affects vast numbers of people whom it seeks to serve. Nor should it be a question of prestige for the workers or those who advise them, because their prestige will suffer far more if they do not follow the right course. Therefore, we have to consider this matter dispassionately and without any attempt to humiliate any group. In spite of the wrong action taken by many textile workers in Bombay and their advisers, our approach to them should always be friendly and our attempts

11. *See ante*, p. 189.

should be to win them over. Otherwise, frustration and bitterness of soul creep in and lay the seeds of future conflicts. I earnestly trust that all concerned will view industrial conflicts in a spirit of accommodation and not with a desire to injure and humiliate.

19. I have referred to the Nasik Congress resolutions. There is one about khadi.[12] I would invite your attention to the wording of it. It is not a mere repetition of the old appeal, but rather a constructive approach to this question. It must always be remembered that whatever industrial progress we might make in terms of the big machine, and I am all in favour of it, yet enormous numbers of our people continue to be unemployed or are only partially employed. No solution, even in terms of production, is adequate if it does not tend to solve or mitigate the problem of unemployment. This stress on khadi and cottage industries is therefore meant to emphasize this aspect of the question. We are continually giving subsidies to big industry. Can we not subsidize khadi and cottage industries also? I suggest this not on sentimental grounds, but as a practical proposition for today. At the same time, however, we have to remember that no cottage industry will ultimately succeed, even in a partial way, if it is based on completely inefficient means of production. We have in the past not tried hard enough to make cottage industry efficient, as the Japanese have done. Therefore, we have remained more or less where we were relying on sentimental appeals only. I have no doubt that we can increase the efficiency of cottage industry greatly by applying scientific methods to it. Meanwhile, we should support it by subsidy or otherwise. Even as a political symbol khadi has had a long and honourable career in our country. Let us not allow that symbol to become tarnished. We are on the

12. The resolution on khadi, while reaffirming the Congress faith in and commitment to promotion and encouragement of khadi and village industries "on political and economic grounds", urged the Government to help in the development of improved techniques and encourage the purchase and use of khadi and "the other products of village industries as much as possible."

eve of an anniversary which we shall no doubt celebrate all over India, as we have done in past years. How will it profit us? To remember Gandhiji on a particular day and to forget him for the other days and to forget what he stood for throughout his life, not only khadi and cottage industry, but the basic lessons which he taught to this country, and which for a while raised us in our own estimation and in that of others?

20. I have discussed at some length certain domestic problems. I shall now deal with international affairs. Since I wrote to you, we have recognized Israel.[13] We would have done this long ago, because Israel is a fact. We refrained because of our desire not to offend the sentiments of our friends in the Arab countries. Our recognition of Israel means no particular change in our policy.

21. We have also welcomed here the new Chinese Ambassador.[14] His arrival in New Delhi completes the exchange of diplomatic relations between India and the new China. In spite of many differences, these two great countries look to each other and I believe have grown a little nearer to each other during these past critical months. It may be said that the fate of Asia depends a great deal on the relations between India and China. I think it may be said with some truth that this present relationship and a certain measure of confidence in each other, has helped to avert world war.

22. The Korean situation has undergone a dramatic change and the forces of North Korea have practically been defeated and driven out of South Korea.[15] This has given rise to new problems.[16] Till recently it was said on behalf of some of the

13. On 17 September 1950.

14. On 18 September, General Yuan Chung-hsien presented his credentials to the President of India.

15. The South Korean forces reached the 38th parallel after covering on 29 and 30 September 200 kms without resistance.

16. The South Korean Government planned to cross the 38th parallel and occupy the whole country.

leading Powers of the West that there was no intention of their going beyond the 38th parallel.[17] But this sudden success has made them think of changing their plans.[18] We have felt that it would be wrong and dangerous for the U.N. forces to cross the 38th parallel at this stage. There is undoubtedly a risk of conflict with China, because China believes that her existence is threatened.[19] There is also the risk of this conflict being prolonged in North Korea and many incidents happening which might lead to an extension of the conflict. We have, therefore, expressed our views against the crossing of the 38th parallel by U.N. forces at this stage.[20] I do not know how the future will develop, but an earnest attempt should be made to put an end to this conflict and then devise peaceful methods for the establishment of a united and free Korea. Whatever the future may have for Korea, these last three months have shattered and destroyed large parts of both South and North Korea and the suffering of the Korean people has been incalculable.

17. On 21 September, President Truman had said that the crossing of the 38th parallel was a question for the "United Nations to decide" and he "would abide by the decision of the United Nations." Prime Minister Robert Menzies of Australia said on 27 September that the "Big Three" had agreed that U.N. forces in Korea should not go beyond the 38th parallel without U.N. sanction.

18. On 30 September, Warren Austin, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, called upon the United Nations to remove the "opportunities for new acts of aggression" by denying to "aggressor forces" any "refuge behind an imaginary line, because that would recreate the threat to the peace of Korea and of the world." On the same day, a resolution was submitted to the General Assembly on British initiative to "take all appropriate measures to insure a stable situation in the whole of Korea", which by implication meant authorizing the U.N. forces to cross the 38th parallel.

19. On 30 September, Zhou En-lai had declared the United States as the most dangerous enemy of China and said that the Chinese people "will not stand aside should the United States wantonly invade the territory of our neighbour." He also informed the Indian Ambassador on the next day that China would have to support North Korea if the 38th parallel were crossed.

20. At a press conference on 30 September, Nehru spoke against the crossing of the 38th parallel and said that it would be wrong to carry on "military operations when peaceful methods could bring positive results."

23. Yesterday I addressed a press conference. I have sent you separately a report of what I said there [21] in regard to the Korean situation as well as about Sir Owen Dixon's report on Kashmir to the Security Council.[22] Also about the proposed no-war declaration between India and Pakistan.[23] I shall not repeat that here, but I would beg of you to read that report of my press conference so that you may know how we view these important matters.

24. We had hoped that the International Monetary Fund would come to some decision regarding the exchange value of the Pakistan rupee. This decision, however, was postponed with the result that the trade impasse between India and Pakistan continues. Normally speaking, two neighbouring countries like India and Pakistan, which till recently had one economy, should depend on each other a great deal for their imports and exports. But, unfortunately, we have got tied up with various problems and conflicts. Above all, this question of the value of the Pakistan rupee has made trade very difficult. We have had some barter deals and we may have them again. But there is going to be no normal trade till this basic question is settled.

25. It may interest you to know what the recent figures are about migration between East and West Bengal. There has

21. Not printed.

22. Clarifying India's position on Kashmir, Nehru said that India considered aggression on Kashmir as an act of a "shameless kind" and that the people of Kashmir should decide its future; any settlement should be arrived at through peaceful methods only; India would not recognize the "two-nation theory", and it was her "legal and moral" duty to protect the people of Kashmir. Commenting on Dixon's proposal to replace the Government in Kashmir for purposes of holding a partial plebiscite, he said that it would be "grossly unfair" and "a major victory for aggression."

23. Nehru said that a no-war declaration would produce a psychological effect on the people and help in the settlement of various issues. India had also indicated "a way of deciding matters in a dispute" by suggesting that the two major issues, the canal waters and the evacuee property, could be referred to a tribunal for arbitration.

been a progressive change in them and more and more Hindus have been going back to East Pakistan. The average daily figures for the period, 8th September to 20th September 1950, are as follows:

	East to West Bengal	West to East Bengal
Hindus	5,291	5,141
Muslims	3,112	2,551

It should be remembered that a very large proportion of these travellers are ordinary passengers and smugglers. You will notice from these figures that the surplus of Hindus coming from East Bengal to West Bengal was being progressively reduced. There was, however, some considerable surplus among the Muslims coming to West Bengal.

26. Later figures are even more significant. During the four days, 24th to 27th September, 21,418 Hindus came from East Bengal to West Bengal, and 26,619 Hindus went from West Bengal to East Bengal. Thus, in four days there was an excess of 5,201 Hindus going to East Bengal from West Bengal.

27. The Muslim figures for these four days are:

Coming to West Bengal		11,785
Going to East Bengal from West Bengal		7,949

Thus there was an excess of 3,836 Muslims coming into West Bengal.

It must be remembered again that these figures include normal passengers and smugglers. For Hindus the average daily figure of normal passengers and smugglers in both directions is about 4,000.

28. These figures definitely show: (1) that the exodus of Hindus from East Bengal to West Bengal has slowed down very considerably, and (2) that the return process is daily becoming

stronger. In regard to Muslims, they show that the return of Muslim migrants to West Bengal is fairly strong. From the point of view, therefore, of people coming and going between East and West Bengal, the situation is definitely satisfactory. This, however, does not mean that conditions in East Bengal are yet satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

29

New Delhi
8 October, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

In my last fortnightly letter I pointed out to you that the international situation was grave. Subsequent developments have brought matters to a head and it is quite possible that within the next day or two other serious consequences might follow. The United Nations has clearly decided now[1] that the United Nations forces, in Korea, which are primarily U.S.A. forces, should cross the 38th parallel into North Korea. The People's Government of China has also apparently decided and have announced that in the event of American forces entering North Korea, Chinese forces will also enter Korea.[2] These two rival forces converging on each other may well come into conflict and lead to war on a larger scale than at present. That, as you will realize, has far-reaching consequences, and might lead to world conflagration. All this need not happen immediately but it may not also be delayed.

Naturally, we cannot be certain of what will happen and it cannot be wholly ruled out that wiser and saner counsels might prevail. Nevertheless, we have to realize that we are on the verge of a crisis which the world has feared for so long. We have to be prepared for anything that might happen. So far as we are concerned, we shall try our utmost to keep out of any extension

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. The resolution was passed by the General Assembly on 7 October 1950.
2. See *ante*, p. 218.

of military operations that might take place, but there are bound to be reactions in India to these serious developments elsewhere and I want you and your Government not only to keep wide awake in regard to internal developments but to plan ahead for any such conceivable development, so that you may not be taken by surprise. This applies not only to the law and order position, but even more so to economic consequences. We have to function calmly and without allowing excitement to fill people's minds.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

30

New Delhi
16 October, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Since I wrote to you last, there has been an appreciable toning down of the tension in the Far East. The situation is still difficult and one cannot rule out the possibility of an extension of the war area. But there is less chance of this now, or at any rate, of a direct conflict between China and the U.N. forces. As you know, we were opposed to the crossing of the 38th parallel by the U.N. forces without making another effort at a peaceful settlement.[1] We felt that after the collapse of the North Korean armies in South Korea, it was worthwhile to make an effort at a peaceful settlement. This was desirable in itself and it was also to be preferred because of the risk of the war spreading and other countries being involved in it. The reports we had received from our Ambassador in China indicated that feeling in China was exasperated and inflamed, because of the repeated refusal of the United Nations to admit the new China and because of fear that the United States was bent on attacking China.[2] The crossing of the 38th parallel appeared to the Chinese Government as another move in the direction of an attack on China itself. I believe there was no justification for thinking that either the United Nations or the U.S.A. were thinking in terms of an attack on China. But there can be little doubt that the Government of China believed that this was possible and intended sometime or other. They declared quite

1. India abstained from voting on the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 7 October 1950, for such action might intensify North Korean opposition, increase tension in East Asia and lead to loss of faith in the United Nations.

2. See *ante*, p. 218.

clearly that they would resist any forces that crossed the 38th parallel.[3]

2. In view of this, we urged the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments not to take a sudden step of this kind, as the risk of war spreading was great. In any event, it is always better to exhaust peaceful methods of approach. The U.N., however, at the instance of the U.K. and U.S.A., decided to cross the 38th parallel [4] and issued directions to General MacArthur accordingly.[5] The North Korean forces refused to surrender and have continued to resist. In the existing circumstances, the U.N. forces are bound to drive the North Koreans further towards the Chinese border. Probably the war will change its character and will be more of the nature of guerilla warfare. This may continue for longer than is expected. It is possible that U.N. forces will not go right upto the Chinese border but will stop some distance away from it, after capturing the North Korean capital.[6] This will avoid any danger of conflict with China. We have little news of what China has done or intends to do. There are some reports that Chinese troops have crossed the border into North Korea and occupied a strip of territory there.

3. So far as the objective in Korea is concerned, we agree to what the U.N. has declared, that is, the establishment of a free and independent government in United Korea elected by the

3. China declared on 11 October that she could not "stand idly by while Korea was invaded by the United States and its accomplices."

4. On 8 October, the U.S. troops crossed the 38th parallel at Kaesong on the west coast.

5. On 12 October 1950, the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK), set up by the U.N. resolution of 7 October to "consult and advise" the military command in Korea, called upon General MacArthur to assume provisionally responsibilities of civil administration and government of those parts of Korea, north of 38th parallel, which might come under the occupation of the U.N. forces,pending their final settlement.

6. On 19 October, Pyongyang fell to the U.N. forces.

people.[7] We also agree that these elections should be organized under the auspices of the United Nations. But no one knows when military operations will end. War is easy to start but more difficult to end. Meanwhile, large parts of Korea have been turned into a wilderness and the casualties are very great. Seoul, the capital city, is in ruins. It was to avert or at least to limit this tragedy that we suggested a more peaceful approach after it had been shown that the North Koreans had been defeated in warfare. I still feel that this was the right approach and the longer this is delayed, the more will new problems arise. When war takes place, it is often forgotten by those who control armies that they are dealing with masses of human beings who have human feelings and human reactions. Old-style warfare confined to some professional armies brought certain results which could, on the whole, be prophesied. But now when there is what is called total war in any country or area, we get mass reactions which poison the future.

4. We have had reports of atrocities by the North Koreans. We have also had reports of atrocities committed by the South Koreans. Tens of thousands of innocent people have been done to death, quite apart from the military casualties. What is happening in Korea is bad enough from the human point of view; it can serve as an example to us, many times multiplied, of what might happen over large areas of the earth's surface, if world war came.

5. It seems to me as clear as anything can be that the problem of Korea or of the Far East generally cannot be settled without the concurrence of the two great neighbouring countries—China and the U.S.S.R. Hence our desire to associate them in the U.N. for the solution of this problem. We have opposed or abstained from voting when some resolutions

7. Though India abstained from voting on the resolution of 7 October, the Government communique of 12 October clarified that India could not support that part of the resolution which gave sanctions to the U.N. forces to carry out the objectives as stated in the resolution.

were brought up before the U.N. by the U.S.A. or the U.K. delegations.[8] It seemed to us that the approach of these resolutions was not a good one and did not lead to peace but rather to a preparation for future wars. We have also felt that the United Nations should not become merely a group of nations, however many they might be, lined up together against another group. The whole object of the U.N. was to include all the nations, even though they might differ from each other. There has been much criticism in the United States of our action,[9] although there are many there who appreciate it.[10] I am convinced that the line we have adopted has not only been a right one from the world point of view but also an advantageous one from India's point of view. Because of various developments and our own reactions to them, India has been thrust in the forefront of international affairs and a great responsibility rests upon her. I earnestly hope that we shall be true to our ideals and not barter them because of fear or some momentary gain at the cost of our larger good. Public memory is short, especially in other countries in regard to India, and passions have been roused which come in the way of clear thinking.

8. India abstained on 7 July on a British resolution in the Security Council which provided for the creation of a unified command under the United States, and on 7 October, on the eight-power resolution, in the General Assembly. She opposed on 10 October a seven-power resolution in the Political Committee, providing for reservation of a certain proportion of national forces by the member-States for use by the U.N. to counter aggression and for convening an emergency session of the General Assembly in the event of the Security Council getting "paralysed" by use of the veto by some members.

9. For example, on 12 October, the *New York Times* commented editorially that "Pandit Nehru purports to speak for Asia, but it is the voice of abnegation, his criticism now turns out to have been obstructive, his policy is appeasement, worst of all, one fails to find a valid moral judgement in his attitude. One can feel certain that history will condemn the Nehru policy as well-intentioned but timid, short-sighted and irresponsible."

10. For example, Einstein described India's abstention on the Korean resolution as correct and in keeping with the principles upheld by Nehru.

6. During the last fortnight a session of the Pacific Relations Conference has been held at Lucknow.[11] This is an international conference and many important delegations from foreign countries have come to it. For the first time since the war, a Japanese delegation has also attended such a conference. Many of the problems of the Far East and of South East Asia have been discussed there and, inevitably, there has been much difference of opinion.[12] Because of developments in Korea, the question of the Japanese peace treaty [13] is becoming a more urgent one than it was. I might add that the Pacific Relations Conference was wholly non-official and Government was in no way connected with it.

7. There have been repeated references in the press to some kind of a Chinese invasion of Tibet. On inquiry we have found that these reports were not true. A Tibetan delegation is still in Delhi and has met the Chinese Ambassador. They have been invited to go to Peking and we have advised them to accept this invitation. Meanwhile they are waiting for instructions from Lhasa.

8. In two of our border countries, Afghanistan and Nepal, there has been much tension. In Afghanistan and at the border areas on this side of the Durand Line and on the Baluchistan

11. From 2 to 14 October. It was inaugurated by Nehru.

12. There was no unanimity of views on issues like the role of the United Nations in Korea, Communist policy in South East Asia, the Japanese peace treaty, regional co-operation in South East Asia, international effects of Japan's economic revival, the future of Formosa, and American economic policies in Asia. The discussions on the alleged desire of the United States to acquire military bases in South East Asia, especially in Japan, had been heated.

13. The United States and the Soviet Union could not agree on the peace treaty to end the American occupation of Japan since 1945. While the U.S. contended that the treaty be framed by a 13-member Far Eastern Commission which would take decisions by a two-third vote, the Soviet Union insisted on the 'Big Four' retaining the power of veto. On 8 September, President Truman appointed John Foster Dulles to hold discussions with the member-nations for formulating the terms of the treaty.

border, there has been great excitement and reports of conflicts between Pakistani forces and tribal people have reached us.[14] It is difficult to have details of these conflicts or to know exactly what is happening. But there can be no doubt that the tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan is very acute.

9. In Nepal there has been a good deal of political trouble[15] and we have been warned from many sources, including the Government of Nepal, that there is likely to be more trouble. We sent for our Ambassador[16] in Kathmandu and discussed the situation with him. Our position there is a delicate one. As a Government, we are on friendly terms with the Government of Nepal. At the same time, we are strongly of opinion that conditions in Nepal are very backward and there is a good deal of repression. We have been urging the Nepal Government to introduce substantial reforms of a democratic character. Some minor reforms were recently introduced,[17] probably under stress of circumstances. But these do not make much difference and have not eased the situation. Our sympathies are therefore with those who seek to reform. But we cannot support any violence or illegality in our territories.

10. Our relations with Pakistan continue to be bad, though nothing special has happened recently. The hysterical agitation that took place and is still continuing in regard to Kashmir has

14. Pakistan alleged violation of her territory in the Dobandi area of Baluchistan by some Afghan tribesmen and regular troops who were pushed back on 5 October. Afghanistan denied this.

15. An agitation for the establishment of a democratic government in Nepal was started by the Nepali Congress in September. Reports of subversive activities, including a conspiracy to assassinate the King and others followed the arrest in Kathmandu on 24 September of certain persons believed to be acting at the instigation of the Nepali Congress.

16. C.P.N. Singh. For b.fn. see Vol.1, p. 361.

17. On 22 September 1950, Prime Minister Mohun Shumshere inaugurated the two Houses of the Nepal Parliament as provided for in the 1948 Constitution, but did so in an unconstitutional manner. The Upper and Lower Houses were both filled with Ranas and their followers, and even the elections to the Lower House were held in highly improper manner.

undoubtedly embittered these relations further. In spite of this, there is no reason why we should not settle these differences to the advantage of both countries. Because of this overriding fact, we have continued to press for a no-war declaration and for a reference to a joint judicial tribunal of the two major questions, evacuee property and canal waters.[18] We have had no answer from Pakistan to our latest communication on these subjects. Our proposal in fact deals with all major issues except Kashmir, which cannot be treated in this way and stands by itself. There is another question—the exchange value of the Pakistani rupee. This is being considered by the International Monetary Fund and it is possible that some decision may be arrived at in the course of the next two months or so. Thus the only two important questions that remain are evacuee property and canal waters which, we have asked, should be referred to a joint judicial tribunal of high standing. We are prepared to refer other disputes to this tribunal in the future, provided they are justiciable. Meanwhile, the temporary Indo-Pakistan Trade Agreement[19] has lapsed[20] and there are no formal means for carrying on trade.

11. As regards Kashmir, no further development has taken place and the matter is pending before the Security Council.

12. Some attention has been attracted recently to Mr. Mandal's[21] resignation from the Pakistan Cabinet[22] and a long

18. Nehru renewed the proposal in a letter to Liaquat Ali Khan on 8 October, and subsequently at a press conference on 16 October 1950.

19. Signed on 21 April 1950.

20. On 30 September 1950.

21. Jogendra Nath Mandal (1906-1969). A prominent Harijan leader of East Bengal; Minister, Bengal Government, 1946; Muslim League's nominee in the Interim Government, October 1946-July 1947; first President of Pakistan Constituent Assembly, August 1947; Minister, Law and Labour, Pakistan Government, August 1947-October 1950. Later returned to India and died here.

22. On 8 October 1950.

statement that he issued.[23] Mr. Mandal's past record is so unsavoury from India's point of view that it is hardly possible for us to accept him and his statement as completely *bona fide*. Throughout the gravest crises, including the holocaust in August and September 1947, Mr. Mandal continued to serve Pakistan. Nevertheless, some of the facts given in Mr. Mandal's statement are useful to us.

13. In my last fortnightly letter I pointed out that the return of Hindu migrants to East Bengal from West Bengal had taken a new turn. More and more Hindus were returning to East Bengal. Later figures, during this fortnight, have confirmed this impression and there has been an ever-increasing returning exodus of Hindus to East Bengal. At the same time, more Muslims are returning to West Bengal. This is generally a healthy sign. The average figures of exodus between East and West Bengal for the period from 21st September to 8th October are as follows:

	East Bengal to West Bengal	West Bengal to East Bengal
Hindus	5,782	6,568
Muslims	2,811	2,390

On some days the return of Hindus has been much greater than this average. Thus the figures for nine days from 4th October to

23. Mandal stated on 8 October that he had resigned as Minister in Pakistan as he came to the conclusion that the future of the minorities was darkened by the ominous shadow of conversion or liquidation. He alleged that his attempts to offer employment to the members of scheduled castes in East Bengal had been frustrated and "some of their rights and privileges had been taken away." He also recalled his warnings to Liaquat Ali Khan about "the anti-Hindu policy" pursued by the administration and leaders of East Bengal.

11th October were as follows both for Hindus and Muslims:

Date	HINDUS		MUSLIMS	
	East to West	West to East	East to West	West to East
4 October 1950	6,059	7,381	3,305	2,706
5 October 1950	5,810	6,896	2,977	2,231
6 October 1950	5,442	7,217	2,647	2,299
7 October 1950	5,091	6,512	2,829	2,341
8 October 1950	4,768	6,078	3,231	2,480
9 October 1950	5,368	7,398	2,854	2,609
10 October 1950	7,171	6,913	2,437	2,468
11 October 1950	6,424	6,515	2,822	2,427

14. As you know, the South African Indian question is on the agenda of the United Nations Assembly. A vague attempt was recently made by South Africa via Pakistan to induce us to have some kind of informal talks. We are always prepared to have talks, formal or informal, but we have made it perfectly clear that we cannot allow this pretext of talks to keep out this question from discussion in the Assembly.

15. We have discussed at great length the sugar policy to be adopted for this season.[24] I shall not say much about this here, as you will be hearing from our Agriculture Ministry.[25] There has been a conflict of opinion amongst many of us on this matter. We want to increase sugar production and have offered some incentives for this. But we feel that it is dangerous to raise the

24. At the Chief Ministers' Conference in August 1950, some Chief Ministers favoured decontrol of sugar even at the risk of increase in price while others favoured import of sugar to offset the rise in price. But all had agreed that incentives should be provided to increase production.

25. The Ministry of Agriculture announced on 19 October that the Cabinet had decided not to make any change in the price of sugar and sugar-cane, but to provide incentives to the growers and producers of indigenous and refined varieties of sugar.

price of sugar, as this is bound to have a powerful psychological effect on the prices of other important commodities. We are trying very hard to reduce the general price level. If we increase the price of sugar at this stage, no one will attach any importance to our statements for bringing down the general price level. We do not, therefore, propose to change the prices either of sugar or of cane. Certain incentives have, however, been offered for increased production.

16. Another question has arisen as to whether and how far we should replace foodgrains production in favour of commercial crops, such as jute and cotton. The latter bring us more money. On the other hand, we have always given first priority to food production and we shall continue to do so. There is no reason why there should be any real conflict between food crops and commercial crops. We have examined this question thoroughly and come to the conclusion that in certain areas jute and cotton should be encouraged, but, at the same time, we wish to lay the greatest stress on the production of food remaining the first priority. That is to say, we have every intention of producing enough food by the end of the 1951-52 season to meet our normal requirements. It is important that this fact should be borne in mind as doubts have arisen and some people have said that there is little chance of our keeping to our time-table. Having examined the question carefully, we feel that there is every chance of our succeeding, provided we work for it.

17. I have previously laid stress on our Grow-More-Food Campaign concentrating on high yield from the land at present being cultivated. This is far more important than bringing additional land under cultivation. If we do not increase yield, even the additional land remains at a low level. We have thus to pay special attention to the quality of our cultivation. This, as is well known, is very backward and even a little effort should make a great difference.

18. Then there is the question of destruction of food crops by pests, wild animals and bad storage conditions. An enormous

quantity of food is thus destroyed annually. If we could save this, or even a fair proporton of this, our food problem would be solved. Unfortunately, some of our social habits come in the way of dealing with wild animals and other pests. All I can say is that we shall have to change such habits as come in the way of the larger good. We cannot have human beings starving or lacking food because wild animals are destroyng it.

19. Two days ago, I paid a visit to our National Physical Laboratory[26] near Delhi. I have often been there previously and every time I have gone I have noticed the great progress made. On this occasion, particularly, I was surprised and pleased to note what had already been done and what was being done. This laboratory is a magnificent one which can compare favourably with any like place in the world. I am not referring to the building and the equipment, which are good, but rather to the whole conception and the quality of the people working there. Our younger scientists are full of promise and I have no doubt that they will produce good results, both in the realm of pure science and in the application of science to industry. Our Governments are criticized frequently about our various shortcomings. Among the things for which we can take full credit is the development of national laboratories all over India. These are the foundations of advance in almost every field of activity. Perhaps, this is not realized sufficiently by most of our people because of our political background. We have not yet developed sufficiently the scientific or the engineer's outlook, and yet whatever policy we may adopt and whatever laws we may frame, the basic fact is scientific and industrial progress. I should like you and members of your Government to visit our laboratories whenever you have the chance. The two principal ones are: the National Physical Laboratory near Delhi, and the National Chemical Laboratory[27] near Poona.

26. The National Physical Laboratory was set up in January 1950 to undertake both basic and applied research.

27. The National Chemical Laboratory was set up in January 1950.

20. We are trying hard to economize and I presume that you are also doing so. Economy at the cost of efficiency is not economy. As a matter of fact, there is no conflict between the two. I feel that our present system of working is neither efficient not economical. We had in British times a top-heavy administration, but the top was a relatively small one. Now we have a very big top and yet the same heaviness prevails throughout. It is not possible for us to continue to function in this way, and we have, therefore, to think afresh. Again the normal bureaucratic system of working is not suited to industrial and social problems. No business can be run efficiently on that basis. Government have to deal more and more with these problems and they should adapt themselves to them. The system of noting by various grades of people is a system which has been done away with in other countries. Normally, there should be only one note in the file and that by the officer who can take some action on it. Previous notings are just wasted. We should concentrate on the quality of our work. A large number of people lacking in quality do not make up for it. In any event, human beings have ceased to be cheap in India and that is a very good sign, but that also means that they have to be more efficient and more productive, whether in factory, field or office. Fewer persons should turn out better work and thus maintain their own standards and the standards of the work they do.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

31

New Delhi
1 November, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The outstanding events in foreign affairs during the last fortnight, so far as India is concerned, have been the developments in Tibet.[1] There had been repeated rumours of Chinese troop movements on the Tibetan border since July last and this led us to draw the attention of our Ambassador in Peking and, through him, of the Chinese Government to the desirability of having peaceful negotiations for the settlement of the problem.[2] No precise information was available about these border movements and often they were denied or explained as movements on the other side of the border. There is an intermediate area between China and Tibet proper[3] which China has considered as part of one of her western provinces and in which China had a right by a treaty[4] to keep garrisons. Many of these movements appeared to be in this middle area. Communications are difficult in Tibet and news travels slowly. So, it was not easy to know what was happening.

1. On 11 October, Chinese troops entered Tibet and occupied a strip up to fifty miles across the Sino-Tibetan border; and on 25 October the Chinese Government announced that the "People's Army units have been ordered to advance into Tibet to free 3 million Tibetans from imperialist oppression and consolidate the national defences on the western border of China."

2. See *ante*, p. 167.

3. The sparsely populated and mountainous area in Outer Tibet adjacent to the western provinces of China especially Sinkiang, where both China and Tibet claimed to exercise sovereignty.

4. China had insisted on her right to post troops in Outer Tibet as authorized by the 1890 Convention between Great Britain and China.

2. On our part, we drew the attention of the Chinese Government repeatedly to this matter and pressed them to rely on peaceful methods. They replied that they were prepared for peaceful negotiations and the Tibetan delegates should go to them for this purpose. At the same time, statements were made about an army being prepared for the "liberation" of Tibet, and this was publicly announced as early as August last.[5] We had hoped that, in view of our friendly advice as well as the international situation, military operations against Tibet would be avoided. We advised the Tibetan delegates to go to Peking and, after some hesitation, they had agreed to do so.[6]

3. When news came to us that the Chinese Government had formally announced military operations against Tibet, we were surprised and distressed. Immediately we sent a note of protest[7] and requested the Chinese Government not to proceed with these operations and wait for the Tibetan delegates. Their answer[8] was rather curt and laid stress on Tibet being an integral part of China and thus a domestic affair. No outside country, according to them, had a right to interfere in this domestic matter. They still expressed their willingness for peaceful negotiations, but said nothing about halting the advance of their troops. We have again addressed them[9] on this subject and our correspondence will be published before you get this letter.

4. I must say that this action of the Chinese Government has hurt us considerably and has appeared to us as an act of

5. See *ante*, p. 167.

6. See *ante*, p. 201.

7. The note of 26 October 1950 expressed "surprise and regret" that the Chinese Government "should have decided to seek a solution of the problem of their relations with Tibet by force instead of by the slower and more enduring methods of peaceful approach."

8. On 30 October 1950.

9. On 31 October, the Government of India expressed "an earnest hope that the Chinese Government will still prefer methods of peaceful negotiation and settlement to a solution under duress and by force."

discourtesy in view of our prolonged correspondence on this subject. It has also seemed to us an essentially wrong act and one that might well add to the tensions existing in the world. To use coercion and armed force, when a way to peaceful settlement is open, is always wrong. To do so against a country like Tibet, which is obviously not in a position to offer much resistance and which could not injure China, seemed to us to add to the wrongness of this behaviour. From the international point of view, it was bound to react against China's own interests. Why then should she do it? It is not for me to guess, but it seems clear that owing to the development of the war situation in the Far East, and the accounts of repeated bombing of Manchurian towns,[10] the Chinese Government believed that they were threatened with war by their enemies. A temper arose there full of fear and apprehension and resentment against those real or fancied enemies, and this led possibly to a change in policy or to a speeding up of what might have taken much longer to develop.

5. Whatever the reason may be and whatever their motives may be, the Chinese Government has, in our opinion, acted not only wrongly but foolishly and done injury to itself, to some extent to us and, I think, to the cause of world peace. As you know, we have consistently tried to be friendly to the new China and have championed her interests in the United Nations and elsewhere. Thus, the new developments must necessarily affect our friendly relations. We do not intend to change our general policy because that is based on certain principles, as well as our judgment of the world situation. We do not even wish to do injury to China in any way, but we shall have to consider carefully every step that we may have to take in the future.

6. There has sometimes been reference in the press to the consequences on our own frontiers of China's occupation of

10. See *ante*, p. 195.

Tibet.[11] From a military point of view, this has not great consequence and involves no particular danger to India. Tibet is a very difficult country with an average altitude of 12,000 feet and then there is the great Himalayan barrier. It is an exceedingly difficult matter for any considerable body of men to cross into India over that barrier. But, in any event, we shall always keep proper watch on our extended frontiers, to prevent any incidents happening.

7. The Korean war, after an easy advance of the U.N. troops and the South Koreans, has now slowed down somewhat, not far from the Manchurian border. While it may be said that the North Koreans as an army have been defeated completely, it is quite possible that guerilla operations or some organized resistance may still continue for some time. Meanwhile, the United Nations have passed some resolutions about the future of Korea.[12] With the objective of a united and free Korea we have agreed, but we have not associated ourselves fully with some of the resolutions passed by the U.N., because we did not agree with vital parts of them. It seemed to us that those resolutions were framed more with the idea of preparing for large-scale war than for peace. Where there is danger, preparation becomes necessary. But too much war talk and war preparation itself brings war nearer. One of those resolutions was described by me as something in the nature of an extension of the Atlantic Pact.[13] This description was greatly resented in

11. For instance, *The Statesman* (New Delhi), of 29 October 1950, had editorially cautioned that "even if the threat to the subcontinent should evaporate or, on examination, proves less immediate than some may dramatically suppose, it obviously now can be disregarded by neighbouring non-Communist States only at their close peril."

12. On 10 October, a seven-power resolution was introduced in the political committee calling for contribution of military forces by the member states to the United Nations to counter aggression. India abstained on this resolution as it had abstained on the eight-power resolution of 7 October. See *ante*, p. 227.

13. Commenting on what was popularly known as the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution, Nehru had said on 16 October 1950 that "it seems like converting the United Nations into a larger edition of the Atlantic Pact and making it a war organization more than one devoted to peace." See also *ante*, p. 227.

the United States and perhaps elsewhere.[14] I do not think that the description was wrong, although, of course, there are many differences between the two. It seemed to us that the United Nations, under stress of fear and strong emotion, was being led into a war mood and that was dangerous for the peace of the world. Gradually, there was a mounting hysteria in some countries and enormous war budgets were passed. Our small voice made little difference, though it was appreciated by large numbers of people all over the world, because few people want war and nearly all are passionately desirous for peace. Nevertheless, our declarations and the attitude we adopted in the United Nations led to bitter criticism of India and, more especially, of me, in the United States specially. For my part, and I have given the most earnest thought to this matter because it concerned issues of war and peace and the future of the world, I feel convinced that the general attitude we have taken up has been the right one and that it should be persisted in.

8. We have recently had a visit[15] from the Foreign Ministers[16] of Burma. We took advantage of this visit to discuss many problems that are common to our countries.[17] In international

14. The *Washington Post* of 17 October 1950 described Nehru as an "academic word-splitter" in world affairs on account of his refusal to support the crossing of the 38th parallel and said "well, perhaps he has too much on his plate at home to be depended upon for anything more than oratory and is too bemused by his fealty to chip-on-the-shoulder nationalism to see the world situation in perspective." The British press also expressed disappointment at Nehru's stand and the *Scotsman* (Edinburgh) of 17 October considered that Nehru's attitude "betrays a rather naive lack of realism."

15. On 24 October 1950.

16. Sao Hkhun Hkio (1912-1973). Member of the Burmese Constituent Assembly, 1947; Counsellor for Frontier Areas to Government of Burma, 1947-48; Minister for and Head of Shan State, 1948; Acting Foreign Minister, 1948; Foreign Minister, 1950-58 and 1960-62; Deputy Prime Minister, 1956-58.

17. These problems related to trade, immigration, air services, the position of Indian nationals in Burma, and the compensation payable in respect of lands owned by Indian nationals following the nationalization of land by the Burmese Government.

affairs our outlooks are similar, and both countries desire that there should be co-operation between them. This applies, to a large extent, to Indonesia also.

9. The situation in Indo-China has greatly deteriorated from the point of view of the French and the Bao-Dai Government they protect.[18] It seems clear that the present French forces there cannot succeed in their conflict with Ho Chi-Minh's Government. They might even be progressively pushed back. This may result in military help being sent by the United States to Indo-China. If this help is given in sufficient quantity, it is possible that the military situation might change. But, as we have always claimed, the sword will not finally decide. Some other kind of an approach is necessary to win the masses of people who want to free themselves.

10. The question of a Japanese peace treaty is now becoming topical and much attention is being paid to it. During the past two or three years there has been a conflict in approach on this subject between the various Great Powers. It is hardly likely that they will all agree to a common approach. Therefore, it is now being considered whether it is possible and desirable to have such a peace treaty with Japan even though all may not agree.[19] A curious situation has arisen because Japan, which formerly was a great military nation, is now by its very Constitution completely demilitarized and cannot keep armed

18. French troops withdrew from several important military outposts after suffering serious reverses in September and October 1950.

19. The United States circulated on 26 October 1950 terms of a treaty for approval by "any or all nations at war with Japan willing to make peace." According to this draft, Japan would recognize the independence of Korea, agree to U.N. trusteeship with the United States as the administering authority over the Ryyky and Bonin Islands, and accept future decisions of the 'Big Four' Powers about the status of Taiwan, the Pescadores, South Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands. If no decision were arrived at within a year of the enforcement of the treaty, the matter should be referred to the U.N. General Assembly.

forces.[20] Can a free and independent Japan exist without an army, etc. or should it revert to militarism? Should its independence without an army be guaranteed by some other nation or by the United Nations? If any nation gives that guarantee, it will presumably like to keep its armed forces there and that would be a negation of Japanese independence. Can then the United Nations undertake this burden of guarantee, but without keeping any forces there? These are the problems that are uppermost in the minds of the Japanese people. There are many there who want to go back to their old armed might; there are also a good number who do not want an army and want to devote their resources to their betterment in other ways. I might mention here that the progress that Japan has made in economic recovery during the past three or four years is remarkable. In the same way, defeated and destroyed Germany has recovered rapidly and has almost reached her pre-war figure of production.

11. In Nepal, there appears to be a great deal of ferment and for some weeks past all kinds of rumours have been spread about inner conflicts and popular dissatisfaction. Nepal is an independent country and we have no desire to interfere. At the same time, we are greatly interested in the progress of democratic institutions in that country. Apart from our preference for democracy, it is clear to us that the country will not be able to face its internal and external problems unless it makes substantial progress in this direction. Events in Tibet give additional importance to the position in Nepal.

20. The Japanese Constitution, promulgated on 3 November 1946, laid down that "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes," and that "land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained."

12. In the United Nations much time has been spent over various resolutions called the 7-Power [21] and 8-Power resolutions.[22] There was deadlock over the appointment of the Secretary-General.[23] This has now been resolved by the re-appointment of the old Secretary-General, Trygve Lie.

13. The Kashmir issue awaits hearing before the Security Council [24] and publicity has been given to a resolution sponsored chiefly by the United Kingdom.[25] We are entirely opposed to the whole concept of this resolution and we have instructed our representative to oppose it.

14. Ever since the Dixon Report came out,[26] there has been a fierce and thoroughly indecent agitation in Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. Every attempt has been made to whip up enthusiasm all over Pakistan and also, more especially, in the tribal areas. Pakistan newspapers are full of it and demands are made for *jehad* and a resumption of war, pledges are taken and

21. The 'Uniting for Peace' resolution sponsored by the U.S.A., the U.K., France, Canada, Turkey, Uruguay and the Philippines was accepted by the U.N. Political Committee on 19 October and passed by the General Assembly on 3 November 1950. See also *ante*, p. 227.

22. See *ante*, p. 239.

23. In the Security Council, while U.S.A. wanted Trygve Lie to be re-elected as Secretary-General, the U.S.S.R. wanted Zygmunt Modzelewski, the Polish Foreign Minister, to replace him. To break the deadlock, the question was referred to the General Assembly which voted on 1 November extending Lie's term by three years.

24. The issue was discussed in the Security Council on 21 February 1951.

25. The resolution called for the appointment of a new U.N. representative to effect the demilitarization of Jammu and Kashmir, prepare plans for a plebiscite, and raise a military force either locally or from amongst the members of the U.N. for this purpose.

26. It was placed before the Security Council on 19 September.

scrolls signed.[27] From the accounts that reach us this agitation has not got the solid basis which readers of newspapers might imagine. It was evidently organized at this particular moment because Kashmir was coming up before the Security Council. Pakistan hoped perhaps that by shouting and cursing a great deal it might make a difference. As a matter of fact, the situation in the so-called 'Azad Kashmir' has been a progressively deteriorating one and there have been several instances of outbreaks of riots there suppressed by shooting. In the tribal areas, the movement for Pakhtoonistan is slowly growing. This has led to repeated bombing from the air by the Pakistan Air Force.[28] Because of all these internal weaknesses and difficulties, the Pakistan Government has tried to divert attention by trying to whip up a frenzy in regard to Kashmir. They have not succeeded or made much difference, in spite of the publicity in the press.

15. I spent the last weekend at Srinagar in Kashmir[29] and had occasion to meet the General Council of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.[30] Just before my arrival, this council had been meeting and had passed an important resolution.[31] In this resolution, apart from recounting past history, etc., they had come to the conclusion that a

27. For example, on 24 September, after offering *Id* prayers, many people in Lahore took a vow "to deem no sacrifice too great for the complete liberation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir." On 5 October, Liaquat Ali Khan stated that "Pakistan stands for the liberation of the people of Kashmir, India for their subjugation.... for Pakistan, Kashmir is a vital necessity, for India it is an imperialist adventure."

28. On 24 October, the Afghan Government charged Pakistan with violation and bombing of Afghan territory by its army and air force and causing casualties among the civilian population.

29. From 29 to 30 October 1950.

30. On 28 October 1950.

31. This resolution described the Dixon report as "a clear negation of the right of self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir state," condemned the U.N.'s "prolonged failure" to solve the Kashmir dispute and called on the people of Kashmir to assert themselves by electing a Constituent Assembly at the earliest to decide on the future of the state.

Constituent Assembly should be held as soon as possible to determine the constitution of the state. I commended this resolution. I was happy to notice the vitality and strength of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference. Their General Council which consisted of over 150 persons, had gathered there from the ends of the state, including Ladakh but, of course, excluding areas held by Pakistan. Kashmir has recently had a terrible visitation in the shape of widespread and unprecedented floods in the Valley. Tremendous damage has been done and a new burden cast on the Government and people of Kashmir. It is a heavy burden and it is for us to share it, as we are trying to share the burdens caused by great calamities in other provinces. In spite of this blow, I found the leaders and prominent workers of the National Conference in good heart and facing these new as well as old trials with courage.

16. There has been a good deal of talk about a plebiscite in Kashmir and, as you know, we agreed to it long ago.[32] For my part, I have little doubt that a really fair plebiscite would result in a majority for Sheikh Abdullah's Government and party and for accession to India. The difficulty has been in regard to conditions governing the plebiscite. If Pakistan had its way, it would convert Kashmir into a field for bitter, violent and most bigoted propaganda on the basis of religion, leading to riots and disorder on a large scale. That is not the kind of plebiscite we have envisaged, and that is why we have laid great stress on the conditions. The U.N. mediator, Dixon, made a proposal which appeared to us astonishing. That proposal amounted to converting the Valley of Kashmir and other parts into a kind of half Pakistan even before the plebiscite. This would naturally have created a powerful psychological reaction and an impression that Pakistan had half come and would fully come a little later. In fact, it would have been the most unfair preparation for a plebiscite and we made it clear that we could not agree to it. The new proposal in the U.N. Security Council

32. On 2 November 1947. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, p. 22.

to have a committee of non-permanent members of the Council is a curious way of meeting with the situation.[33] All kinds of commissions and inquiries have taken place and now it is proposed that some representatives of South American and other countries, sitting in New York, should take the matter in hand and decide. It is obvious that this can lead to nothing except, perhaps, to entangle us still further in false assumptions and wrong procedure. In our extreme desire to find a peaceful settlement, we have allowed ourselves repeatedly to get more and more tied up. We have accepted the U.N. resolutions with safeguards and reservations. Those safeguards and reservations have been forgotten or put aside and we are called upon from time to time to act up to the old resolutions, minus reservations. Because of all this, we have come to the conclusion that we cannot permit this drifting and sliding process to go on any longer. The Kashmir issue can only be solved by agreement between the parties concerned and all that an outsider can do is to help in bringing this about. Even that help in the past has not produced any great results. The alternative to such settlement is either war or a continuing stalemate.

17. We do not, for our part, wish to decide this or any other issue by war. I have declared publicly that we shall not go to war over Kashmir[34] unless we are attacked by Pakistan. I invited the Prime Minister of Pakistan to make a like declaration, but he has hesitated to do so and produced all kinds of irrelevant arguments. Apart from this question of Kashmir, we proposed a general no-war declaration to Pakistan. That too has got stuck up in a lengthy correspondence in which each party's viewpoint is repeatedly emphasized.[35] Our viewpoint is simple: let both countries declare that they will not go to war against each other for the settlement of any dispute and will seek methods of negotiations, mediation, arbitration or reference to some international

33. The proposal did not materialize.

34. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol.1, p.215.

35. See *ante*, p. 230.

tribunal. It is clear that arbitration or reference to a tribunal would not apply to certain types of political disputes which are not justiciable. Thus they cannot apply to Kashmir.

18. We have made another and a very precise proposal to Pakistan about the settlement of two of our major problems, evacuee property and canal waters.[36] I wrote to you about this in my last letter. The Prime Minister of Pakistan's reply to our proposal did not take us far.[37] I have again written to him earnestly pressing him to agree to this proposal at least and thus take a firm step towards the solution of two of our major disputes.[38] I await his reply.

19. As you know, there has been a permit system for visitors to Kashmir. It was proposed to put an end to it, but, on reconsideration, we have decided to continue it for some time. The idea behind discontinuing it was to encourage tourists to go without inconvenience. As a matter of fact, the tourist season has ended and not many people will go to Kashmir during these winter months. I might add that during the last summer, there was a considerable influx of tourists into the Valley and, but for the floods, this would have been even greater.

20. The trade position vis-a-vis Pakistan continues to be the same, that is to say, it is more or less at a standstill. It is difficult to resume it so long as there is no final settlement about the par value of the Pakistani rupee. We hope that some decision will

36. See *ante*, p. 230.

37. Liaquat Ali Khan wrote on 18 October that he was reluctant "to mar the improved atmosphere created by your assurances by harking back to the situation in May 1948." However he added that "when the canal agreement was signed...it was in no sense a voluntary one for Pakistan." Instead of making a concrete proposal, Liaquat Ali asked Nehru for the "draft of the convention governing the composition, the authority, the rules of decision and procedure, etc., of the *ad hoc* court which your proposal envisages."

38. On 27 October 1950.

be arrived at in the course of this month by the International Monetary Fund.[39]

21. I pointed out to you in my last letter that there had been a remarkable increase in the return of Hindu migrants to East Bengal. This tendency has continued and more and more of these migrants are going back. The average daily figures of exodus between East and West Bengal are now as follows:-

	East to West Bengal	West to East Bengal
Hindus	5,630	8,022
Muslims	2,506	2,500

From the Hindu figures roughly 4,000 should be deducted on both sides as normal passengers as well as smugglers. Thus, we have a figure of Hindus coming out of East Bengal to West Bengal about 1,600 and Hindu migrants going back from West to East Bengal about 4,000. In the course of the last month a very considerable number of Hindu migrants have thus returned to East Bengal. It is said that many of them go there to sell their property or bring back their belongings. That certainly is true about some. But this kind of thing cannot be repeated week after week and month after month. If people go back to get their property, they swell up, when returning, the numbers of fresh migrants. In effect, we can take the two figures and note the difference.

22. From our other sources, we have been informed that the position in East Bengal, in so far as the minorities are concerned, has improved in some ways. Fewer incidents, such as dacoities, etc., are reported. The police in East Bengal is also a little more active than it used to be and there is some change

39. The Fund finally took a decision in March 1951 after India agreed on 25 February to recognize the Pakistan rupee at par value.

in the attitude both of officials and the public in East Bengal. It is possible also that the fact that the time-limit for return, as given in the Delhi Pact (the end of December), has also had some effect on more people returning either way.

23. While we have accurate figures for East and West Bengal, we have not got equally accurate figures for Assam. One feature of migrants' return, which is exercising the minds of the Assam Government, is the fact that some new people go from East Bengal to Assam, with the intention of settling down there. This really is an old problem, quite apart from partition or the Delhi Agreement. We have pointed this out to the Pakistan Government and further thought has to be given to it. We are definitely of opinion that we should not have a permit system in the East such as we have in the West. This would not be in consonance with the Delhi Agreement and would in fact come in the way of the large-scale movement of migrants going back.

24. I might mention here that there has been a relatively small but continuous flow of Muslims going to West Pakistan from various parts, usually via the Sind border. This is without permits and without any regulation.

25. In both East and West Pakistan, more especially in the former, there has been a large-scale agitation against the proposed basis of the Constitution of Pakistan.[40] Even the

40. There was division and debate on the Basic Principles Committee report submitted to the Constituent Assembly on 7 September relating to the proportionate representation of East Bengal in the Federal Legislature, on the distribution of powers between East and West Pakistan; and on the status of the Urdu and Bengali languages in the country. Five M.L.A.s from East Bengal appealed on 3 October to the people to resist the imposition of the "unconstitutional constitution" which "ingeniously but solidly lays the foundation of dictatorship in Pakistan" and "bristles with anti-democratic measures."They argued that "to anybody who knew anything of Islam and democracy, the purely fascist and anti-Islamic character of the basic principles will be evident beyond any iota of doubt."

Muslim League in many places has joined this agitation[41] and *new parties have been formed, opposed to the orthodox parties.* The whole political situation in Pakistan is thus rather fluid. The jute position in East Pakistan is growing more and more difficult as prices are falling.

26. Our Food Minister has the misfortune to face new problems, new difficulties and new crises from week to week and almost day to day. Owing to failure of rains in September and October in some places, notably in parts of Bombay, Bihar and Madhya Bharat, crops have been ruined and wholly unforeseen demands are being made upon us. This month of November and early December are a peculiarly difficult time. We hope to get larger supplies in December from abroad. Meanwhile, we must tighten our belts and it is up to those provinces who have any additional stocks, to give them, or rather to loan them, to the less fortunate States. It is natural for the better situated States to be averse to parting with what they have got. But the situation is a grave one and we can guarantee to them the return later of what they give now. Let there be no doubt about this. Early next year, we shall be in a position to do so. Meanwhile, I would earnestly request these provinces to keep about three or four months' supply with them and give the rest for use in the deficit areas. This will enable us to get over the present difficulty and bring relief to innumerable countrymen of ours in various parts of India.

27. After a very great deal of thought and discussion, we have announced our policy in regard to sugar and *gur*.[42] Some States have not welcomed our decisions, but I can assure them that they were taken after the most careful consideration of all factors and in consultation with the Planning Commission. I hope that they will give full effect to this policy. You will have

41. At the East Pakistan Muslim League Council meeting attended by Liaquat Ali Khan, some members described the report as "terribly anti-Bengali."

42. See *ante*, p. 232.

noticed the decision to increase the export duty on hessian from Rs. 350/- per ton to Rs. 750/-.

28. Government are considering the desirability of introducing control on newsprint. There is a shortage of it which results in great hardship to a large number of newspapers. A few prosperous newspapers, which have large stocks with them, are not affected. It may be necessary to go back to some of the restrictions which prevailed previously in regard to price and size of newspapers.

29. The work of preparation for the general elections is now taking definite shape. There has recently been a conference of election officers from all over India in Delhi [43] and their problems were thrashed out by them. The work of delimitation of constituencies has been partly finished. Finality can only be given to many of these matters after Parliament has decided. But, meanwhile, electoral rolls are being published. It can now be said with some confidence that the elections will be held by May 1951. We must, therefore, keep this date in mind and work up to it.

30. I have found that in some States the names of some women are not entered in the electoral rolls and they are described as the wives of so and so. This is completely wrong and cannot be accepted. If proper names are not given, the person concerned will not have the right to vote.

31. I have been glad to notice that in some States stringent measures are being taken to combat black-marketing and many persons have been arrested for this offence.[44] May I say,

43. From 31 October to 2 November 1950.

44. For example, in a drive against hoarders and black-marketeers started on 4 October, it was reported by *The Statesman* that by 13 October about fifty persons had been arrested and prosecutions launched against one hundred and seven persons in Bihar. Also, over a million yards of cloth and 21,000 pairs of dhotis and saris were seized in Bhagalpur alone. Reports of such seizures were also received from Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Guwahati.

however, that I was surprised to read in the newspapers that some people so arrested were handcuffed and marched in this condition through the streets? This struck me as most improper, though it may have pleased the public. It was improper because those arrested men were under-trials and not found guilty till then. It was improper also because this kind of thing should never be resorted to, except in the case of dangerous criminals who are apt to be violent. I am prepared to say that a person who indulges in anti-social activities is worse from the community's point of view than a normal criminal of another type. But he is not violent and is not likely to run away. He has other methods of trying to escape being punished. To handcuff him or to handcuff any person, except in case of grave necessity, is not in keeping with civilized traditions.

32. The textile strike in Bombay at last came to an end,[45] after a long period and after causing very great loss both to the strikers and to the country.[46] I have expressed my opinion about this strike previously and how wrong and unjustified it was when matters were actually being considered by a tribunal. I should like to stress now the importance of preventing any victimization of the workers after the strike is over. It is impossible and undesirable to punish all the strikers. It is equally undesirable to pick out some and punish them. That will only be invidious treatment which will be resented by others. We cannot have peace in industry and labour unless our approach is always a friendly one and an attempt is made to win over people. There have been strikes of miners in collieries in Bihar and Orissa.[47] These strikes have also ended and I hope here also there will be no victimization.

45. The strike ended after 63 days on 15 October 1950.

46. It was unofficially estimated that the strike had resulted in the loss of 60 million man-hours, more than Rs. 4 crores by way of wages to workers, and Rs. 23 crores in business transactions.

47. The strike in state railway collieries from 16 September to protest against the discontinuance of the supply of foodgrains to workers at concessional rates without reference to the tribunal was called off on 20 October.

33. The period of earthquakes in Assam is not quite over yet and severe shocks sometimes come.[48] But what is more important is the fact, that is now becoming more apparent, that the landscape in some parts of the State has completely changed. Many hills have slipped away and masses of trees and vegetation have been uprooted. There is thus likely to be a very great deal of erosion when the rains come, and floods on a big scale may well result. Thus, the next rainy season may bring further disaster to the State if something is not done previously.

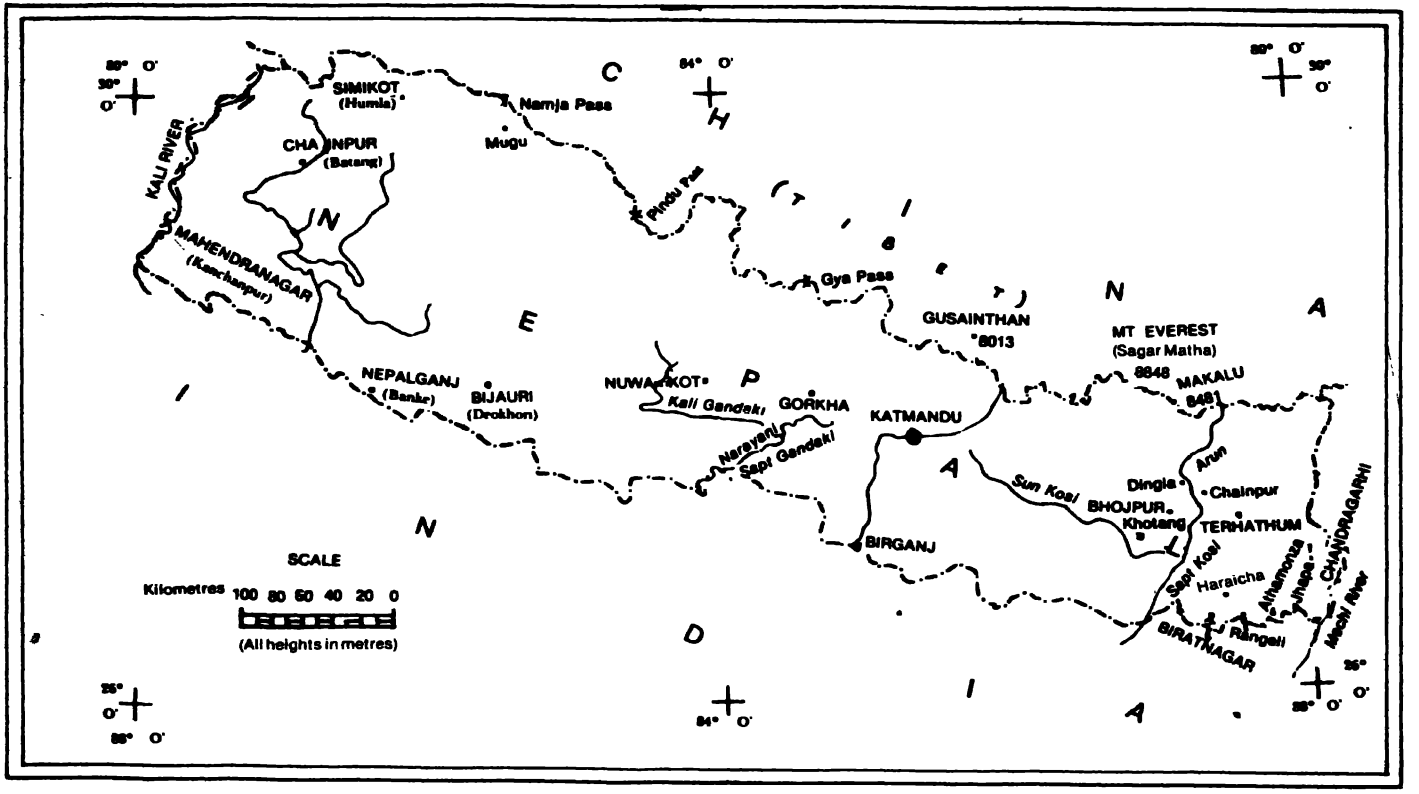
34. As I put finishing touches to this letter on November 2nd, I learn that George Bernard Shaw[49] died this morning. We can hardly grieve about the passing away of a man at the age of 94, and yet this man has meant so much to our generation and to large numbers of us as individuals that his death comes as a sorrow, and produces an emptiness. One of the really great men of our time has passed away.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

48. Between 15 and 27 August the loss to public and private property caused by a series of earthquakes was estimated at Rs. 74 lakhs. Damage was also caused to about 2,000 granaries and 65 tea gardens.

49. (1856-1950). British playwright and critic. For Nehru's correspondence with Shaw, see Jawaharlal Nehru, *A Bunch of Old Letters* (Delhi, 1958), pp. 516-520.

NEPAL


SIMIKOT
(Humla)
Namja Pass
Mugu
KALI RIVER
CHAINPUR
(Bajang)
MAHENDRANAGAR
(Kanchanpur)
Pindu Pass
Gya Pass
GUSAINTHAN
8013
MT EVEREST
(Sagar Matha)
8848
MAKALU
8481
NEPALGANJ
(Banke)
BIJAURI
(Dhokhori)
NUWAKOT
Kali Gandaki
GORKHA
KATMANDU
Narayani
Sapt Gandaki
Sun Kosi
Dingla
Arun
Chainpur
BHOJPUR
Khotang
TERHATHUM
BIRGANJ
Sapt Kosi
Haraicha
Ithamonia
Jhapa
CHANDRAGARHI
Mechi River
BIRATNAGAR
Rangeli
SCALE
Kilometres 100 80 60 40 20 0
(All heights in metres)

32

New Delhi
16 November, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

I am writing to you about the situation vis-a-vis Nepal.[1] We have been in constant touch by telegram and we have indicated to you what our general attitude should be. Novel questions are continually arising. As a rule, when any new situation arises, I would suggest to you to communicate with us, as indeed you have been doing. But I wish to explain more fully than we have done in our telegrams about the situation generally and our own views in regard to it.

2. Our sympathies are naturally with progressive movement in Nepal. This is so not only because we think that political and economic progress is good in itself, but also because we feel that having regard to various developments in Central Asia, etc., it is important that Nepal should get out of its old rut and feudal regime. We have repeatedly impressed this upon the Prime Ministers of Nepal, but with little success. We have warned the present Prime Minister[2] on several occasions that he will have to face trouble.[3] His attitude has been not only unhelpful but

* A special letter addressed only to the Chief Ministers of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

1. On 6 November, King Tribhuvan, hearing that Rana Shumshere Jung Bahadur planned to involve him in a political conspiracy and force him to give his consent for the installation of his grandson, Prince Gyanendra (b. 1947) as the new King of Nepal, took asylum in the Indian Embassy at Kathmandu and reached Delhi on 11 November 1950 accompanied by his son Prince Mahendra (b. 1920) and other members of the royal family.

2. Mohan Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana. For b. fn. see Vol. 1 p. 561.

3. See *ante*, pp. 24, 47-48.

most discouraging. Sometimes indeed it has not been wholly courteous. The result has been a growing tempo of repression in Nepal and a feeling of frustration among many people there. On the advent of independence in India, many people in Nepal and many Nepalese in India naturally looked towards India and thought that our advice would result in substantial changes there. We followed a strictly correct policy in regard to the Nepal Government and interfered in no way with them, except, as I have said above, by giving advice. The Nepal Government was at first rather apprehensive of what we might do to them. Having realized that we can confine ourselves to advise only, they lost that feeling of apprehension and ignored what we told them. When we had a treaty of friendship with Nepal early this year,[4] they utilized this to strengthen their own existing regime and generally made it known to people round about them that they had been too clever for the Government of India.

3. While this was their attitude towards us, they relied more and more on such foreign contacts as they were developing, in order to strengthen their regime. In particular, they relied upon the British Ambassador,[5] who used to be the Government of India's representative there in earlier days and who is particularly reactionary in outlook and anti-Indian. The British Ambassador, instead of supporting our advice in favour of reform, came in the way of it. This had an important influence on the present Rana regime in Nepal and made them less responsive to change.

4. While we are all in favour of change and any popular movement demanding change, we have naturally desired such change to take place by peaceful means. We made it clear to

4. See *ante*, p. 48.

5. Lieut.-Col. Sir G.A. Falconer (1894-1981). Joined Indian Political Service, 1923; served in Middle East, 1924-31; Secretary to Resident, Kolhapur, 1932-33, Baroda, 1933-35; British Consul at Kerman (Iran), 1937-42; Political Agent, Bhopal, 1942-44; British Minister in Nepal, 1944-47; British Ambassador to Nepal, 1947-51.

the Nepal Government repeatedly that we would not come in the way of any peaceful agitation for change in Nepal. But if anything against our law took place, we would naturally take action.

5. We have known for sometime past that things were coming to a head in Nepal. Indeed, within the last month, quite a large number of high-ranking officers and even members of the Rana family have been arrested and imprisoned. Our information has been that they have been tortured also. All we could do was again to press the Nepal Government to think in terms of reform. Some little while ago, they did introduce what they called reforms, but these were of no value at all.[6] We knew also of the conflict between the King and the Prime Minister. The King[7] in fact was kept almost in some kind of detention and had little freedom to contact people. He wanted to come to India for medical treatment as well as to meet people, but he was not allowed to do so. The King was supposed to be in favour of the popular movement. We realized that, in view of this conflict, there was a possibility of the King seeking shelter in our Embassy. If that happened, we could not refuse it. When the King actually came to our Embassy with his family, this was a surprise. I was away in Bombay then. The behaviour of the Nepal Government, during the next two or three days, was peculiar and far from friendly towards us. They refused to permit the King to come to India. However, when our Ambassador pointed out the consequences of such behaviour, they relented and the King was allowed to come. Meanwhile, the Nepal Government rushed through some kind of a ceremony of crowning a baby grandson of the King.[8] The whole thing was irregular even from the point of view of the Nepal laws. They tried to make out at first that the King had abdicated or intended to abdicate. The King resolutely denied

6. See *ante*, p. 229.

7. Bir Bikram Shah Tribhuvan. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 362.

8. On 7 November, Prince Gyanendra, the grandson of King Tribhuvan was crowned as King of Nepal by the Prime Minister and the ruling Ranas.

and said that he had no such intention. We told the Nepal Government that we could not accept these changes and we would continue to recognize the King for the present at least and till we could consider these matters more fully.

6. These developments in Nepal obviously took even the Nepal Congress people by surprise. Indeed they appeared to have known nothing of the flight of the King to our Embassy till two days after it occurred. All this indicates that, there were no contacts or co-ordination between the King's escape and the Nepal Congress, and much less with the Government of India. Soon after they heard of these developments, the Nepal Congress people appeared to have decided to strike a blow. They collected their people and attacked Birgunj as well as some other points.[9] In Birgunj some of the Nepal soldiery joined them and the surprise attack in the middle of the night succeeded. During the next two days or so, there was a good deal of confusion round about that border and your Government no doubt was put in some difficulty as to what should be done and what should not be done. The fault was not yours. Ultimately, we issued instructions to both the two Governments especially concerned, Bihar and U.P. These instructions were not to allow armed people to come out of Nepal or to go into Nepal and not to allow Indian territory to be used as a base for operations in Nepal. We also issued instructions that no aircraft should go to Nepal without our permission, apart from the normal service, if that was resumed. Thus, we took an attitude of strict neutrality, so far as the inner troubles of Nepal were concerned.

7. The position was peculiar. We continue to recognize the King, when the Nepal Government has put someone else in his

9. On 11 November, the supporters of the Nepali National Congress, formed in 1947 by the Banaras group of Nepali political exiles to overthrow the Rana regime and replace it by a democratic government under the constitutional leadership of the King, rose in revolt and occupied Birganj, 75 km., south of Kathmandu, released political prisoners, and established a provisional government.

place. We continue to recognize the Nepal Government too and deal with them. The King was obviously in sympathy with the insurgents and the latter also said that they were in favour of the King. Although this position was very peculiar, from the point of view of constitutional law, some precedents, not exactly applicable of course, can be found for periods of transition like this. This position continues, though obviously it cannot continue as such indefinitely. It may, however, continue for some time.

8. The Nepal Congress people have behaved exceedingly foolishly in many respects. They were under a false impression that because we continued to recognize the King, and they were also in favour of the King, therefore we were going to support them actively in their campaign. In their folly, they not only looted the Birgunj treasury but brought it to Delhi to present to the king.[10] We took possession of this treasure in Delhi and in Bihar and we shall keep it under safe custody for the time being. We have now made it perfectly clear to these people that we shall act strictly in a manner so as not to get entangled in any way with their activities; that we shall not encourage any armed activities in our territory. We have also made it clear to the Nepal Government that we will not permit any of their soldiery to come to India by road or rail. In other words, we have maintained to some extent our attitude of neutrality in this struggle.

9. I might inform you that the Nepal Government asked us for armed assistance in quelling the disturbances. They also asked us for passage for their troops through Indian territory from one part of Nepal to another. Further they asked us for

10. On 13 and 14 November, the Indian police seized currency worth Rs. 3,500,000 brought to Delhi by B.P. Koirala, the opposition leader and the President of the Nepali National Congress. The police also seized gold bullion and Nepalese currency being smuggled into Bihar by the Nepali insurgents. Koirala subsequently said that he had brought money to Delhi to hand it over to King Tribhuvan, the constitutional head of the State, and to prevent its falling into the hands of the Rana Government.

bomber aircraft to bomb their own people. We refused all these requests.

10. Thus, the present position is that while we do not permit any armed traffic between India and Nepal, unarmed people, medical missions or others, can come from Nepal or go there from India.

11. It is difficult to prophesy what will happen. But it is clear to us that there can be and should be no going back to the old Rana regime in Nepal. As at present advised, we do not intend to give up our recognition of the old King. We have suggested to the Nepal Government that there should be a ceasefire and a peaceful consideration of the problems. We are prepared to help in this. We have had no answer from them yet.

12. It is probable that the Nepal Government might be able to recover towns or areas, which have passed out of their control, like Birgunj, with the help of their military.[11] But this does not mean that they will put an end to the insurrection. It is very difficult for them to guard their wide territories, especially the rural areas. The result is likely to be that the insurgents will be in possession of wide areas and may move about from place to place. In other words there will be no peace or stability in Nepal till this continues. It seems to me no easy matter for the Nepal Government to crush this movement completely. At the same time it is still less easy for that movement to succeed in a measurable time.

13. We are anxious for peace and stability in Nepal and we are at the same time anxious for a liberal regime there. We would like some peaceful transformation to take place without upsetting everything. If that is not possible, trouble will

11. The advance of the insurgents was checked by the Nepalese army at a number of places to the north, west and south-east of Birganj. The insurgents, however, were able to capture on 15 November, Rangeli, an important trading centre, and on 19 November, Haraicha and Athamonza.

continue in greater or less degree. It is hardly possible for us to go back completely to conditions which prevailed previously. The Prime Minister and his group cannot be friendly to India, nor can we be very friendly to them. If they are wise enough to accept our advice, some way out might be found.

14. It is possible that the Nepal Government hopes to get support from the U.K. Government. This support of course cannot be military. As I have said above, the U.K. Ambassador in Kathmandu is very reactionary and a strong supporter of the Ranas. No doubt he is advising his Government accordingly. Even so, we do not propose to change our policy, because we are convinced that there should be no going back in Nepal. Popular opinion in India would not tolerate it and that would not be an ending of the trouble.

15. I might inform you that the last Prime Minister of Nepal, Sir Padma Shumshere Jung,[12] who retired about a year ago and who is living in Ranchi, has given his support to the old King. So have some other members of the Rana family.

16. I have given you a background of the position. It is essentially fluid and we shall have to keep in touch with each other in regard to any new development.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

12. Padma Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana (1892-1965). Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Nepal, 1943-45; Prime Minister, 1945-48.

33

New Delhi
17 November, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

The last fortnight has seen one new development, which affects India more than any other country. There has been a dramatic suddenness about events in Nepal. The King's [1] flight to our Embassy at Kathmandu, the refusal of the Prime Minister's Government to allow him to come to India, the crowning of a three-year old babe as King, the uprisings in certain border areas of Nepal and the capture by the insurgents of the important town of Birgunj, the removal of the treasure there and later its transport to Delhi, where it was seized by the police. All this has a certain comic opera tinge about it, in spite of its great seriousness.

2. Events in Nepal immediately made people, both in India and abroad, think of our Himalayan frontier and the possible dangers to our security. Happenings in Tibet had already rather shaken many people's confidence and to this was now added Nepal. For the moment, the United Nations with its Kashmir and South African and other issues receded somewhat in the background and Tibet and Nepal came to the front. The new situation created by these events changed, to some extent, the centre of gravity of our thinking, and many amateur strategists talked and wrote about the new dangers to India.

3. It is perfectly true that recent happenings have made a great difference to the balance of power in the world. The most important factor was the emergence of a strong and centralized China. Whether this was going to be a factor in favour of peace

or war, opinions differed. But the fact of its emergence was patent enough and no one could doubt that the old balance had thus been completely upset. To be pushed into prominence in world affairs during these days of crisis is not an unmixed blessing. If China came out as a great power, and a power allied to the Soviets, all previous calculations had to be reconsidered. To us in India and to many other countries in Asia, this had a particular significance. This significance was partly due to the fact that a great country, under the leadership of Communists, was playing an important role in Asia. The forces allied to communism thus gained a great adhesion in strength. But the frequent reference to communism in this, as in other, contexts is apt to make us overlook other long-term factors. One of these, of particular importance to India, was the approach of the Chinese power to the Indian frontier. In Asia, apart from the Soviet territories, India and China are the biggest and potentially the strongest countries. Both of them have played a great role in the past and have influenced their neighbour countries. The influence of each overlapped the other's in large areas, but there was no basic conflict between them. Each of these vast countries was a world in itself and though they had a great deal of trouble often enough, this was mostly confined to their borders, except when some invader came across them. Even so both had a tremendous capacity to absorb those invaders and make them lose themselves in the sea of Indian or Chinese humanity. The power of assimilation of both these countries was tremendous. They did not come into conflict with each other, nor was there ever a real test of how they would affect each other culturally and in other ways, if their interests clashed. In South East Asia, both functioned and both left permanent marks of their influence. Yet, there is no record of conflict between those cultural and other influences. There was a process of adjustment, in varying degrees, in each country of South East Asia.

4. It is a fact to be noted and remembered that during this long period of history, India and China were never really at war, although there were some petty conflicts. Partly, of

course, this was due to their distance, for even though their borders touched each other, they yet remained far, and there was the great Himalayan barrier. But there was something more to it than that. Both, as a whole, were peaceful nations, proud of their heritage and content with it, looking upon others with a certain condescension as at younger and less-developed people. The message of the Buddha, common to both, was also a link, which brought a measure of understanding to each of the other, even though they differed very greatly.

5. The developments in Tibet rather suddenly made people realize that China might have a long common frontier with India, and this new China was probably very different from the old. Also the Himalayan barrier was not quite so effective as it used to be. What would happen when China, with its new-born strength and dynamism and a certain aggressiveness, came right up to the borders of India? Would there be peace between the two or tension and conflict? Even apart from communism, this new question faced us in the future. The addition of communism added to its gravity, because many people feared infiltration of Communist ideas even more than the attack of armed men.

6. In this new development that had taken place in Asia, it became important for all the countries of South East Asia to think of their relations with China. A new adjustment had to be made. The previous China, under Marshal Chiang Kai-shek's[1] Government, was important in many ways. But it did not raise these new problems. Gradually it had become almost an adjunct of European and American politics. It made no great difference to Asia. The new China did make a basic difference to all of us and it did so quite apart from the fact that it was closely allied, in ideology as well as in its politics, to

1. (1886-1975). General and Kuomintang leader; Chairman, Supreme National Defence Council of China, 1939-47; Chairman, National Government of Republic of China, 1943-1949; President, Republic of China (Taiwan), 1949-1975.

the Soviet countries. The question arose as to whether this new and Communist China would function as some kind of a satellite, however big, to the Soviet, or as an independent entity having a will and objective of its own.

7. You will remember that I have often written to you about this new China and sent you reports of our Ambassador in Peking. This was before any war broke out in Korea. My mind was full of these great changes that had taken place and I groped about to understand their significance and the direction in which they were tending. I wanted to share my thoughts with you and to give you such data as I possessed. Whatever our relations with China may be in the present or the future, it is of high importance that we should understand her. We see something there, which is the result of nearly forty years of incessant struggle and war. These wars ruined China to a very large extent. But they also moulded it anew, and something came out of them, which is tough and hard. Has this something lost its basic Chinese character or does that national individuality, for which China and the Chinese have been famous through the ages, still endure? In any event; what was this new amalgam like? The fate of Asia and even of the world was going to be powerfully affected by it. It was not enough to like it or dislike it. It was a fact to be realized and understood. Because of this patent fact, we felt that recognition of this new Government was the right course. But something much more than recognition was necessary; we had to understand it. There can be little doubt that the leaders of this new China are men of ability, steeled by constant struggle. When a great nation has its destinies controlled by such people, who have definite objectives before them, it cannot be ignored.

8. It seemed to us that in this new shape of things, it was important for India and China to have friendly relations, if that was possible. Anything else would, in the long run, have been bad not only for our two countries but for Asia as a whole. Whether it was possible for the two countries to have friendly relations in the present context of things, was not clear. But the attempt had to be made in the interests not only of the present

but of the future. That should not have involved any interference with each other. It could only have been undertaken in a spirit of broad tolerance and understanding and in the belief that the larger interests of our respective countries as well as of humanity demanded it. If that friendship came, there would be a very powerful force for peace in the world. If there was conflict or fear of conflict, then this vast area would become a prey to constant fear and apprehension and our efforts at progress would be impeded.

9. We tried to follow this larger policy and refused to be swept away by the fears and passions of the moment. We wanted to be at peace and to have friendly relations with the other countries of the world, but in the perspective of history, the relations of India and China were even more important. We did not know what China's reaction would be to these efforts of ours and her behaviour in the immediate past had not been encouraging. Nevertheless, we endeavoured to pursue that policy. We considered it fundamentally right and without compromising ourselves in regard to any basic principle. We found gradually that there was some change in the Chinese attitude towards India. The previous hostility, at any rate, lessened or disappeared and at least the tone of friendliness came in. There appeared to be a realization in China, as there was in India, that it was to the interest of both to avoid friction. There was also some kind of an Asian feeling about it. There were, of course, different pulls in each country.

10. The Korean war brought new complications and both these countries had to give answers, from day to day, to difficult questions. We considered it in the larger context of aggression and world peace; China was more intimately affected because the struggle was across her borders and it seemed to her as a kind of possible prelude to some attack on her own independence. Her sympathies were entirely with the North Koreans, because both had come out of the same school. Nevertheless, it was hoped that the conflict would not spread and, on the whole, China remained calm. The collapse of the

North Korean armies rather suddenly altered the situation, and immediately the question arose of the crossing of the 38th parallel. This invisible and artificial line became a symbol and China reacted violently to the possibility of the line being crossed. There can be no doubt now that what she said at the time, she meant, and that she felt that her own security was threatened. We received her messages, clear and explicit, and we passed them on to the other Great Powers. We saw that apart from the rights and wrongs of the question, world war hung in the balance and no risks could be taken with it. Risks however were taken and it was said that all this had been bluff. India had plenty of critics in the western world and we were considered very simple and naive in the art of politics to be taken in so easily by a few threats. Now the world sees that it was something more than bluff or a threat and a new and much more difficult situation has arisen.

11. While all this was happening in North Korea, Tibet came into prominence. China's forces entered it and we learnt of this with surprise and some resentment. It seemed to us not quite fair on the part of the Chinese Government to take this step after all that we had said to them and they had said to us on this subject. It also seemed to us as totally unjustified, for Tibet could be no danger to China and Tibet was willing to have peaceful negotiations. There was also the imminent danger of this little spark helping the fire to spread. We wondered what China's real attitude towards India was. Did she care so little for the friendship of India as to flout our wishes deliberately? Was she really in such a mood for aggressive tactics as not to care for any consequences? It is difficult to peep into the mind of a people during moments of crisis, when they fear their own security threatened. But, looking at it from any point of view, this invasion of Tibet was wrong and foolish. India naturally resented it and our new-born attempts at friendship suffered a blow. That feeling of resentment still remains and a certain apprehension is added to it. I do not think that there is any near danger to our frontiers and in any event we are not so weak as to be frightened. Nevertheless, we have to become more

frontier-conscious and to take all reasonable steps to guard the mountain passes, which lead to our country. But there is no reason for people to get hysterical or even excited about this matter.

12. About Tibet, we still hope that she may retain her autonomy and we shall work for it through diplomatic means; there are no more effective means available. About our frontier, the MacMahon Line,[2] we are adamant and we are not going to tolerate any breach of it. Other questions, such as our mission at Lhasa and our trade posts elsewhere, will depend on circumstances. We are not going to war over them.

13. Looking again at the historical perspective, it is to the interests of Western Powers to prevent China and India getting too friendly. Oddly enough, I think that such friendliness is not to the liking of the Soviet Union also. Therefore, a certain encouragement is given by these Powers to anything which may spoil our relations. We have to face a difficult and delicate situation, both in Tibet and in Korea. We do so, as we have repeatedly proclaimed, by pursuing a somewhat detached policy and judging each issue on the merits. We shall continue to do so, though undoubtedly the developments in Tibet have been a blow to our policy.

14. Coming to Nepal, it is difficult to prophesy what will happen. It seems likely that the Nepal Army will be able to drive out the insurgents from many of the places they have occupied. But that will not necessarily mean the end of the struggle. This means a period of instability and disorder in parts of Nepal. We disapprove of this thoroughly and we would like to have peace there. But it is clear that there is going to be no effective peace, if the old Rana regime continues unchanged. Things have gone too far for a reversion to the old.

2. The watershed boundary of about 850 miles between India and Tibet was formalized at Shimla in 1914 between India, Tibet and China. It was known as the MacMahon Line after the representative of the Government of India, Sir Henry MacMahon (1862-1949).

The position is rather extraordinary. We recognize the old King, who is in Delhi at present, and at the same time we continue to recognize the Rana's Government in Kathmandu. I think that some of the activities of the insurgents have been extraordinarily foolish and likely to injure them. But the fact remains that our sympathies go out to those people and forces which work for a progressive and liberal government in Nepal. We are functioning with strict neutrality, after two or three days of confusion on the Nepal border, when it was difficult to know what was happening and proper orders could not be issued. We have now made our position fairly clear and stated that we will not tolerate armed forces or bands entering India from Nepal or Nepal from India. Realizing that a continuation of this conflict will be injurious both to Nepal and to India, we have suggested a ceasefire to the Nepalese Government and peaceful discussions. We have had no answer yet. But the language some members of the Nepalese Government have used is far from encouraging. Indeed there has been a tendency on the part of the Nepal Government to be somewhat discourteous to us, and of course, not to follow our advice.[3] I do not know, therefore, whether they will accept our suggestion or not. I feel sure that if they do not, they will suffer for it. They rely perhaps on some kind of diplomatic assistance from some of the Great Powers.[4] I rather doubt if they will get much out of them, and even if they did, it will not be easy to profit by it. Nepal is and must remain a country with which India is most intimately concerned and the general policy as to how to meet the present situation will have to be laid down by us. Unfortunately, it appears that some other advisers of the Nepal Government and some of the Western countries do not look upon this in the same way as we do, though they recognize that

3. On 12 November, the Rana Government accused the Indian Government of inciting disturbances in Nepal by allowing the rebels to operate from India.

4. On 7 November, the Rana Government sought the recognition of the new King by Britain and the U.S.A. But these countries preferred to follow India's lead in the matter.

India has the first claim to lay down a positive policy in regard to Nepal. We shall not commit ourselves yet, but events may force our hands at any time and then we shall have to declare clearly what we stand for. We are still recognizing the old King and we are likely to continue doing so. We sympathize with attempts at radical reforms in Nepal and we certainly will continue to do so.

15. The United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council go on debating and passing resolutions. Kashmir has been on the verge of a debate in the Security Council. This had to be postponed for various reasons. I am becoming more and more convinced that this matter will not be settled in the Security Council or by any foreign organization. If it is to be settled, it will have to be settled directly between the parties concerned. I have repeatedly explained our position to you and all I wish to say is that we adhere to that position.

16. As I write this letter, the South African Indian issue is being debated before the Political Committee of the General Assembly.[5] Here also there is not much room left for us to give up anything that we have stood for. Other countries are chiefly interested in South Africa, not because of right or justice or equity or United Nations' Charter of Human Rights, but because any conflict of this kind at this moment is deprecated. South Africa, therefore, gets the support of many countries for this negative reason.

17. Parliament began a new session on the 14th November and the President pointed out, in his Address, the gravity of the international situation. It is indeed very grave. And yet, there are some hopeful signs. Brought to the edge of a precipice, all

5. The draft resolution submitted on 16 November by Brazil, Bolivia, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, recommended that India, Pakistan and the Union of South Africa should discuss the question at a round table conference. The resolution was passed on 20 November 1950 by the Political Committee of the General Assembly.

the Great Powers have suddenly realized where they were and are trying at last to find some way back.

18. As I write this, the debate on the food situation is continuing in Parliament and severe criticism has been made of Government's policy.[6] I shall not discuss this here. But I should like to point out to you what the President has said. He has stated that inevitably we shall have to undergo privations, if we are to meet this grave situation. I regret to say that I do not see the spirit of self-discipline and of enduring privations anywhere in India, individuals apart. This is a more serious affair than the actual shortage of food. We take things too easily and complain loudly if we miss some little comfort or something that we are used to. That is not only unbecoming but a dangerous frame of mind. We have to pull ourselves up and make the country realize what we are up against. We pass laws and rules about punishing the black-marketeer, we fix prices, etc., and yet not much is done. Reports come that foodgrains are sold frequently at a much higher price than fixed. Why shouldn't we take action immediately against this! We talk of shortage of sugar and yet during this *Diwali* season there were mountains of sweets everywhere. In spite of this, people complain. I do not think it is proper or even decent to have this display of luxury foods when common people lack necessities.

19. The Central Government will, of course, do its utmost to help the States that are in need of food. And yet it seems to me that far too much reliance is placed on the Centre and relatively little effort is made in the States. There is even now not that sense of urgency which sweeps everything before it. It is so easy to go on writing to the Centre to supply the needs of each State. It is so easy for the Centre to go on buying abroad at heavy cost, a cost which comes in the way of all our development schemes. It must be remembered that it is the primary duty of each State

6. In the debate on 16 November, the Government was criticized for not completing irrigation and food control schemes, reducing the financial deficit and having a clear programme of food production.

to face this food problem and not merely to rely on the Centre. It must be remembered also that in the present crisis we have all to pull together and help each other.

20. The President has also stated that the general elections have now been finally fixed for November-December 1951. You know how hard I have tried to have earlier elections. But I had to succumb to the facts of the situation. This does not mean that we should relax our efforts in regard to the preparation for elections. We should still continue, as if elections had to be held early, so that we might be completely ready long before the allotted time.

21. I have been giving you, during my recent letters, figures of the movements of population between West Bengal and East Pakistan. I shall not give you any more figures. That movement of migrants back to their old homes continues powerfully. Indeed it may be said that a certain normality is coming into the picture, in so far as these movements are concerned.

22. You were good enough to send me your good wishes on the occasion of my birthday. I am deeply grateful for your affection and goodwill.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

34

New Delhi
29 November, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,*

I have pleasure in informing you that the President has appointed Shri L.M. Shrikant[1] as Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This appointment has been made in accordance with the directions in the Constitution and is an important one. I hope your Government will give every help and co-operation to Shri L.M. Shrikant. His office is situated in New Delhi, but he will necessarily have to travel about a good deal.

The Commissioner is responsible for both the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The Scheduled Castes have fortunately many people to look after them, including many of their own representatives in Parliament and the State Assemblies. The Scheduled Tribes are less fortunately placed in this respect and therefore require greater attention.

I shall be grateful to you if you could ask your Government to send information on the points listed below to Shri L.M. Shrikant, Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. (b. 1897). Administrator and social worker; President, Bhil Seva Mandal, 1923-50; Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes, 1950-61; General Secretary, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, 1961-63; Vice-President and Treasurer, Bharatiya Adivasi Sevak Sangh, 1948-81.

Tribes, New Delhi: —

1) Population figures under each of the heads "Scheduled Castes", "Scheduled Tribes", and Backward Classes including criminal tribes.
2) Activities of the State Government in respect of these classes.
3) Amount spent on such activities during each of the years 1948-49, 1949-50 and 1950-51.
4) Schemes, if any, under contemplation for the future.
5) Non-official activities and the financial aid rendered by the State Government for such activities.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

35

New Delhi
3 December, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

I am sorry for the slight delay in my fortnightly letter. You will appreciate that developments in the international field during the last few days have cast a very heavy burden on us. More particularly, the news that has come during the last two or three days from the Far East has brought a sudden realization of impending catastrophe.[1]

2. It is this feeling of overwhelming danger that fills the mind of all thinking people in the world today. What was a distant and disagreeable prospect has become, with dramatic suddenness, almost a reality. The Prime Minister of England is hurrying to the United States to meet President Truman.[2] Every Foreign Office is tense with expectation of good or bad news. While Governments all over the world are naturally deeply concerned with this turn of events, this is not merely a governmental matter. It affects multitudes of peoples who may have to face fear and all the terrible consequences of war. And so there has been a fear and a revulsion of feeling against such war. The mention by President Truman of the possibility of an

1. Contrary to British and American hopes, MacArthur's 'Home by Christmas' offensive of 24 November, involving the crossing of the buffer strip along the Manchurian border, met with strong resistance and the eventual defeat of the U.N. forces.

2. Attlee informed the House of Commons on 30 November that he was going to Washington so that he and President Truman might "in an intimate way take a wide survey of the problems which face us today."

atomic bomb being used [3] produced powerful and most unfavourable reactions in the public mind in Asia and Europe.[4] It was probably this mention that created a feeling of consternation in the United Kingdom, which was reflected in Parliament there.[5] As a result of this, Mr. Attlee got into touch with President Truman immediately and proposed a meeting. That meeting will probably take place tomorrow or the day after.[6]

3. It is easy for any of us, sitting in the comfort of our studies and offices, to criticize and blame this party or the other. Probably our criticism and apportionment of blame will fit in with our natural grooves of thought. But those of us who have a certain responsibility, and which of us has not got a measure of responsibility, must be clear in our minds as to what we seek. If it is peace that we seek and the avoidance of war, then our minds and actions should be attuned to that end. It is clear that a competition in criticism and invective and calling each other aggressor, will not lead us towards peace. It will only add to the tension and bitterness and thus make it more difficult for a peaceful consideration of any problem.

4. Therefore, it becomes important that we should for the moment stop this contest of words of accusations and think on

3. At a press conference on 30 November, President Truman said that the use of the atom bomb "had always been under active consideration," for "it was one of our weapons."

4. There was criticism both in the British House of Commons and by the Asian representatives at the United Nations.

5. Referring to Truman's statement on the possible use of the atom bomb, Attlee stated in Parliament on 30 November, "...There seemed to be no question of a decision of this kind being taken solely by the military authority. In any case, H.M. Government consider that a decision of such grave import could not be taken on behalf of the U.N. without the fullest prior consultation with those member States who are participating in international police action in Korea."

6. On 4 December 1950.

different lines. This approach should lead the leaders of the principal Powers to meet together and discuss how to stop this drift to war and how to arrive at least at some temporary understanding which, later, might lead to a more permanent settlement. The present crisis is due to developments in Korea. The United Nations, and more particularly the U.S.A., are deeply committed to a certain course of action. China is obviously intensely interested. If there is to be peace between China and the U.N. over the Korean issue, then China must be an equal party to any talks that might take place. Apart from Korea, the question of Formosa is also of vital importance.

5. India cannot make much difference from the military or economic point of view and in the world today it is these matters that count. Nevertheless, India can make some slight difference, because we have tried to follow a policy of non-alignment with any particular group and of thinking in terms of world peace more than anything else. Our voice, though not loud, is listened to with some attention. It is not surprising that in this moment of crisis many countries, who might normally ignore us, are thinking more and more as to what India can do to help.[7] Suggestions have been made that we should make public appeals to this or that end.[8] There is no difficulty in making such an appeal for peace, but that appeal would have no value if it is rejected out of hand by the parties most concerned. So, we have to proceed more cautiously, taking advantage of every opportunity and yet not putting ourselves or any other country in an embarrassing position. We have, therefore, instructed our representatives and ambassadors abroad to work for some settlement by negotiation between the powers

7. Reuter reported on 3 December 1950 that Attlee was believed to have discussed with the French Government the possibilities offered by India's position and that he was expected to ask Truman to join in trying to take all possible advantage of India's contacts with China.

8. Lester Pearson, the Foreign Minister of Canada, had proposed that Nehru should make a public appeal for an immediate ceasefire in Korea and the cessation of Chinese armed intervention as preliminary to exploring the possibility of a settlement with China's co-operation.

concerned, including of course China.[9] We have pointed out to other Governments that this is no time for passing brave resolutions in the United Nations involving condemnation of some nation or other. The only way out is to decide to meet and to discuss the problem from the point of view first of stopping the war, that is a ceasefire, secondly, of having a zone in Korea from which troops should withdraw on both sides, thirdly, of discussing the Korean problem as it is today and the shape it should take in the future, and then the problem of Formosa.

6. While there may be general agreement on this approach, all kinds of considerations of prestige and of giving up a position that had been taken up thus far, arise and prevent that approach by negotiation. It seems clear that every country in Europe and most countries in Asia are anxious and eager for a negotiated settlement. The two countries, and both of these are most intimately concerned, which may have gone too far to make a vital change in their policies, are China and the U.S.A. The U.S.A. is committed to certain policies and certain action in Korea. It is difficult for this great Power to run counter to the policy it has so far pursued. Probably even American public opinion would come in the way of any such marked change. China, after many attempts to enter the United Nations and after trying to avoid an extension of the Korean war, appears to have been overcome by the idea of her freedom being in peril. That brought about a sudden change in her policy and they began to think of and prepare for war. Having come to this conclusion, all the energies of the Chinese nation have been diverted to this end. Both in the U.S.A. and China there is deep suspicion of the other's motives and this probably is a greater barrier to a negotiated settlement than any other.

7. It is interesting to note that, from such information as is available to us, Soviet Russia has not played an aggressive role

9. Acting on this directive, B.N. Rau, on 1 December, called on the head of the Chinese delegation at the U.N. to explore the prospects of a ceasefire so that the U.N. could hold further negotiations for a settlement.

in these latter developments. They have undoubtedly supported China, who is their ally. But it does seem that they are not anxious to have a world war and have therefore exercised a moderating influence on China. If this is so, it leads to the conclusion that while Russia would not mind at all and might even welcome a further extension of the conflict in the Far East involving an ever larger number of American or U.N. forces, she is not desirous of having a world war. This is a helpful factor in the situation.

8. During the last ten days or so, some efforts were made to consider the problem of Korea in consultation with the Chinese. A strong Chinese delegation went to Lake Success [10] and it was hoped that direct contacts between them and representatives of other countries at Lake Success might lead to a clearer understanding of each other's points of view and possibly to a settlement. Just then, General MacArthur's offensive towards the Manchurian border started. About the same time or a little later, resolutions were brought forward before the Security Council condemning China as an aggressor nation [11] and also separately condemning the U.S.A. for its aggression in Korea.[12] This approach on both sides was not conducive to peace. According to the Chinese, a trick had been

10. A Chinese delegation of 9 members headed by General Wu Hsiu-Chuan had reached New York on 24 November 1950 at the invitation of the Security Council to express views on the issues in East Asia.

11. A draft resolution sponsored by the U.S.A. and the U.K., calling for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from North Korea, was introduced in the Security Council on 10 November 1950. The U.S. representative accused the Beijing Government of "open and notorious aggression" in Korea, emphasizing that he used the word "aggression" on instructions from Washington. The resolution was supported by nine countries but vetoed by the U.S.S.R. India abstained.

12. On 24 November, the Soviet delegate charged the United States of aggression against China, and on 30 November, the U.S.S.R. sponsored a resolution, calling for the withdrawal of American forces from Taiwan and "all other territories belonging to China." It was defeated by nine votes to one, while India abstained.

played upon them by talking of peace and at the same time attacking them. They say that they can hardly believe the word of any country when it is so far removed from the actual deed.

9. In any event, the position now is that a meeting of the representatives of the Great Powers plus China is an essential first step. We have suggested this [13] as well as a ceasefire and, immediately after, a demilitarized zone. We have also pointed out that the use of the atomic bomb must be avoided. Any country that uses this bomb for the first time will have a heavy burden to carry and will not have the sympathy of the rest of the world, more especially Asia. We have stressed therefore that the atomic bomb must not be used.

10. There has been some reference in the papers to the possibility of my being invited to Washington for this or subsequent talks. This is completely without foundation and there is no particular point in my going there now. If my going were necessary, I would certainly decide to go. But I see no chance at all of this happening in the near future.

11. You must have read in the newspapers that Mr. Attlee has invited a conference of the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth in London on the 4th. I have accepted this invitation though it is difficult for me to leave India. Whether I go to London or not, however, depends upon developments in the course of the next three weeks or so. If I go, I am supposed to stay there for ten or twelve days.

12. In Tibet there has been no marked development during the last fortnight. So far as we know, the Chinese forces have not advanced. Conditions in Lhasa are more or less normal. This lull has no great significance and there is really no important obstruction in the way of the Chinese forces. If they decide to advance on Lhasa, they can certainly do so. Our

13. Nehru suggested on 2 December 1950 a meeting of the 'Big Four' Powers with China.

position in regard to Tibet continues to be one of regret that military measures were taken by the Chinese Government when peaceful methods were available. Tibet has appealed to the U.N.,[14] but no step has followed this appeal and we do not even know whether the appeal will come up for consideration before the U.N. In view of the position in Tibet, as well as the international situation, it seems to us that little purpose will be served by condemnation of China either in the U.N. or elsewhere. We have suggested, therefore, that a recommendation be made by the U.N., if it considers the question, to the two parties, i.e., China and Tibet, to settle the problem by negotiation and amicably. There is less point now than ever in mere condemnations which cannot be acted upon.

13. Ever since this development in Tibet, there has been much talk in India about threats to our frontier. I think that there is no foreseeable possibility of any real military threat to our frontier via Tibet, for a variety of reasons which I need not discuss here. But there is always a possibility of trouble-makers coming through or infiltrating into India. We are taking adequate measures to prevent this and otherwise to guard our frontier where we might be threatened in any way. It should be remembered that the frontier of India with Tibet and China is tremendously long. It is a mountainous area with some of the highest mountains in the world, and even the passes are difficult to negotiate. During the coming winter, the greater part of it can hardly be crossed except by expert mountaineers. There are some passes, however, which can be used, but even they are none too easy. During the spring and summer, conditions for travel across the border are easier, but still difficult.

14. The appeal made on 7 November protested strongly against the Chinese invasion of Tibet, asserted Tibet's right to complete political independence and repudiated the Chinese claim to suzerainty over Tibet. It also expressed the unalterable opposition of the Tibetan people to communism, and appealed to the U.N. to use its good offices to solve the Sino-Tibetan dispute.

14. Normally, it should be the policy of India and China to have friendly relations without any threat to each other across their common border. In the long run, that is the only policy to adopt by two countries having this common frontier. Any other policy means a tremendous burden on mere defence of frontiers, apart from other consequences. While this should be our normal policy, and this was one reason why we have pursued it, conditions in the world are far too dangerous and explosive for us to think always in terms of normality. We have, therefore, to pursue the normal policy within certain limitations and with all necessary precautions.

15. In Nepal, the position has been almost static for some time. The insurgents had to give up the town of Birganj [15] which they had captured and have now changed their tactics and are following, to a large extent, guerilla methods. It is possible for them or for any organized body of men to carry on these tactics for a long time without being suppressed. If they have popular sympathy, then of course the task becomes easier still. Thus, if this continues, the probability is that while the vital and strategic points will be held by the Nepal Government of today, large areas, away from the main lines of communications, may be cut off from the Nepal Government and generally controlled by insurgents. That means a state of continuing disorder in considerable parts of Nepal. India cannot welcome this state of affairs, more especially when the world is in a state of high crisis and our own frontiers are none too safe.

16. It is our desire, therefore, to have peace in Nepal. But we realize that peace cannot come by an attempt to revert to the old order. Things have gone too far for that, and some essential changes are necessary even from the point of view of peace and orderly development. Of course, we have always been anxious to have this orderly development towards popular and democratic Government in Nepal.

15. On 20 November 1950.

17. You will have noticed that two important Ministers of the Nepal Government have been conferring with us in Delhi.[16] The King, of course, is here also as our guest. He does not confer with the Nepalese Ministers. In the nature of things, we have to deal with both of these separately. Our talks with the Nepalese Ministers have not yielded any substantial result yet. We have proceeded with deliberation and without any attempt to rush things, even though the situation demands quick remedies. Probably, in the course of the next few days, these consultations will end. For our part, we had and have no intention to interfere in the internal affairs of Nepal. But, intention or no intention, they affect us intimately and therefore we cannot ignore them. For the good of Nepal, as well as of our own and the world, we are convinced that the old autocratic regime is not good enough even to give peace and stability and much less for any progress. We have pointed this out to the Nepalese Ministers and told them that it is not for us to suggest changes; it is for representatives of Nepal or, at any rate, of the main groups of Nepal to confer and devise ways and methods. If our advice is sought, we shall certainly give it.

18. The problem, as it is at present, is how to devise some interim form of government till such time as popular consultation on the basis of some kind of a Constituent Assembly can take place. Even this interim government cannot be of the old type. It has to have popular representation and the old autocratic powers have to be limited. For our part, we do not want a complete upset as this would necessarily lead to a period of difficulty and disorder. Therefore, the interim arrangement should, if possible, mean an association of the progressive groups with the Rana group. All depends on how this is done and on the progressive groups playing an effective part.

16. Kaiser Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana, the Senior Commanding General and General Bijay Shumshere Jung, the Director-General of Foreign Affairs, visited Delhi from 27 November to 9 December.

19. There is the question of the King. There has been a lot of talk about our recognizing this or that person. The position, however, is that the old King was recognized by us in the normal course and so long as we do not take any other step that recognition must necessarily continue. We see no reason to take any other step.

20. In the United Nations a resolution on Indians in South Africa was passed.[17] This is fairly satisfactory, although it does not lead us anywhere. In fact, all these questions, however important they might be, have become relatively secondary to the main issues before the world.

21. You must have seen the correspondence with Pakistan on the no-war declaration, etc., which we published a few days ago.[18] It is unfortunate that in spite of every effort we arrived at a dead end; and yet it was not completely a dead end and some time or other we shall have to find a way out. It is not possible to live on with a neighbour country in this state of permanent crisis.

22. International problems have pushed into the background our own present difficulties. The greatest of these is, of course, food and we are passing through a very difficult period. Several States are not only living from hand to mouth, but sometimes the hand does not reach the mouth.[19] I hope that soon this

17. The U.N. resolution of 2 December 1950 called upon South Africa, India and Pakistan to discuss at a round table conference the conditions of Asians in South Africa, directed South Africa not to proceed with the implementation of the Group Areas Act, and suggested setting up of a Commission to hold negotiations if no decision was arrived at the round table conference before 1 April 1951.

18. On 28 November 1950.

19. It was officially stated that except Pepsu, Madhya Bharat and Rajasthan, every State had been afflicted by natural calamities leading to the loss of six million tons of foodgrains. Despite this, 1.3 million tons of foodgrains had been supplied to the States by the Centre between July and October 1950. A further 200,000 tons were still needed.

immediate difficulty will be lessened. Our Food Ministry is completely alive to this problem and is doing its best. I can only appeal to all the States to appreciate what we are doing and to co-operate fully in that task. In regard to sugar and *gur*, certain changes have been made in our previous declarations.[20] I hope these will meet with your approval and will improve the situation.

23. There is one matter to which I should like to draw your special attention. I have received a number of representations from certain backward communities regarding the order made by the President under Clause (1) of Article 341 of the Constitution declaring certain castes and tribes as Scheduled Castes and Tribes for the purpose of the Constitution.[21] This refers chiefly to those castes and tribes having electoral privileges. It does not mean that other backward classes, whatever religion they may profess, should not be given all necessary State aid and facilities, apart from elections. No distinction should be made in regard to this State aid and facilities between Hindu Scheduled Castes and Christian or other backward classes. To withdraw these facilities from Christians belonging to backward communities would be to go against the spirit of the Constitution. It should be remembered that the President's Order relates only to the question of reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and has no bearing on the matter of State aid and facilities to backward classes. In Article 340 of the Constitution the words "Backward Classes" have been advisedly

20. A new policy regarding sugar and *gur* was announced on 1 December seeking to combine the advantages of both control and decontrol. While control was to continue over the sale of one million tons in the current year, some sugar was to be allowed for sale in the open market. Manufacture of *gur* without licence was also to be allowed. A revised price structure was expected to act as an incentive to producers and the industry for raising production.

21. The Presidential Order reduced the number of members belonging to Scheduled Tribes from 248 lakhs, as determined by 1941 census, to 179 lakhs, while the number of the Scheduled Caste members remained practically the same as 428 lakhs.

used in order to remove any misunderstanding regarding the meaning of Articles 340 and 341 of the Constitution.

24. During the last fortnight I paid a visit to Jamshedpur to open another of our national laboratories for research.[22] It is always a pleasure to me to undertake such a task because I attach great value to scientific research. All our progress in this country will ultimately depend upon the scientific talent that we have. During these months and years of difficulty, and sometimes of depression, this fact of scientific advance in India has been a great comfort to me. In Jamshedpur, I visited naturally the great Iron and Steel Works[23] and was pleased to find how they had expanded and progressed since I went there last.

25. There has been a great deal of anxiety in all parts of India at the reported serious illness of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. It is now two and a half years or more since Badshah Khan was put in prison and for us, his old colleagues and friends, it is a matter of deep and continuing distress that the bravest of our comrades should languish in prison. It is difficult to know exactly how he is, but from such accounts as we have received, there is little doubt that he is ill. I hope that wisdom will come to the Pakistan Government to release Badshah Khan before it is too late. I might remind you that another of our old colleagues, who was the leader of Baluchistan, Khan Abdus Samad Khan,[24] has also long been in Pakistan prison.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. The National Metallurgical Laboratory at Jamshedpur was inaugurated by Nehru on 26 November 1950.

23. On 27 November 1951 Nehru visited at Golmuri the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company which manufactured road-rollers and railway under-carriages.

24. (1895-1973). Popularly known as 'Baluch Gandhi'; joined the national movement in 1920 and also worked for social reform in Baluchistan; affiliated his organization to the Congress, 1928-29; imprisoned several times in the freedom movement; imprisoned in 1947 by Pakistan Government and released in 1954; sentenced to 14 years imprisonment in 1958 as leader of the National Awami Party and released in 1968; assassinated in 1973.

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New Delhi
18 December, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Three days ago, when I should have normally written to you this letter, a heavy blow fell upon all of us and upon India.[1] We shall take a long time to recover from it and, even so, there will always be a sense of emptiness for those who had the privilege of knowing and working with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The great ones pass, the warriors who led us in our struggle depart, and we all feel somewhat lonely and desolate. On those who remain, the burden and the responsibility grow heavier.

2. Sardar Patel was a strange mixture of single-mindedness in the pursuit of his objectives and many-sided activities. On all these activities, he has left his powerful impress, and both the Central Government and every State Government have felt, during these three or four years, the mark of a strong and guiding hand. So, in your work, you will miss him as we will miss him from day to day in our work at the Centre. You will have to do without him, for there is no one to take his place.

3. Sorrow and calamity may bear down upon us or encompass us. But we have to carry on, to the best of our ability, the work with which we are charged. Indeed, every calamity is a challenge to our manhood and our nationhood, and an individual or a nation is judged ultimately by the way this challenge is accepted. The entire world today is a huge question mark and a challenge. To this we have to add our own problems and difficulties. Perhaps it is true that a nation can only truly advance if it has to go through the fire from time to

1. Vallabhbhai Patel died on 15 December 1950 at Bombay.

time. It is through this process that we ultimately attained our freedom, and it is perhaps because that process stopped that we grew soft and indolent. We see a curious spectacle around us in the world. The very success that men aim at and struggle for leads often enough to a deterioration of that vital quality which brings real progress to the nation. Failure or lack of success is often the spur to greater effort. Victors in war try to overreach themselves and not satisfied with what they have got, aim at more. Thus they get entangled and lose the fruits of victory. The defeated drag themselves up from the very depths of despair and make good. That surely does not mean that victory is bad and defeat good. But it does mean, I think, that both victory and defeat depend ultimately on some inner quality, and if this is lacking, then other and unforeseen consequences follow.

4. I am led to these thoughts when I look around the world today and when I consider the state of our own country. We have a great heritage, both old and new. But somehow we do not live up to it and grow slack and lazy and lack discipline. The great urge to go ahead in a common brotherhood of thought and action is wanting. It was this very quality of disciplined and co-ordinated action that was the great strength of Sardar Patel's life and work, and it is this that we must learn from him, above all other things. India has, I am convinced, fine material, if only we can utilize it to the best advantage, if only we can bring back to our minds the flaming ideal of service for a cause, which many of us knew in our younger days. It is not so much machinery that we want or even food or other goods from abroad, although they are desirable; what we want are men and women with a purpose and with a will to achieve and with a capacity to work together without finding too much fault with each other. We used to be criticized in days gone by and called a nation of talkers and not of men of action. That criticism faded away when Gandhiji came on the scene. Are we now reverting to our previous habits and justifying that criticism?

5. You will forgive me for thinking aloud in this letter, but I have to bear a heavy burden and my mind gropes about to find the light. I realize all too well my own failings and imperfections; I know that the great work and service that India demands cannot be fulfilled by a few individuals. We have to set the whole nation, including ourselves of course, on the right path. At this moment, when a trusted guide and friend has passed away, we have to think afresh and pull ourselves up. There is far too great a tendency for us to forget and ignore our own work and duty and to concentrate on condemnation of others. This picture is equally applicable to the international sphere.

6. The tragedy of Sardar Patel's death has rather overshadowed other happenings in India. Yet those problems remain and will have to be dealt with. There is, first of all, the food problem, and recently a Food Conference was held in Bombay.[2] You must know all that happened there.[3] We have been living through difficult times and large numbers of our people have suffered from lack of adequate food. As the Food Minister said, we have been living from ship to mouth. Ships are coming in almost daily with foodgrains from far off countries for which we pay heavily and at the cost of much else that we might do. But food is the first necessity and we cannot afford to have our people starve. We have therefore made every effort to purchase large quantities of foodstuffs during the coming months. Those efforts are continuing. We have to do this and yet we must realize that this dependence upon others is not good for the country. It may be the easiest way today, but we pay for it tomorrow and the day after. The problem, therefore, is not one of importing food from outside but,

2. The All India Food Ministers Conference was held from 11 to 13 December 1950.

3. The conference, concerned at the grave food problem caused by natural calamities and the worsening international climate, fixed the target for imports at 3.7 million tons to meet deficiencies and build up reserves; agreed that controls should continue and the price level maintained; and wished the Grow-More-Food Campaign to be implemented vigorously.

somehow or other, to improve our rural economy and produce and procure more food. It will be dangerous for us to forget this elementary fact and to imagine that we are dealing satisfactorily with our food problem by importing large quantities from abroad.

7. There has also been a conference of the Rehabilitation Ministers in Delhi, where all the rehabilitation work of the country during the past three years was reviewed.[4] That work has been notable and can bear comparison with such work anywhere else in the world. Nevertheless, the problem was so vast that a tremendous deal remains to be done. I believe we are making good progress. What is necessary, however, is always to remember the human aspect of this problem and not to consider it as a matter of figures and files. Millions of human beings are involved. In particular, we have always to keep in mind the boys and girls, children of these refugees and give them our first attention. Second in importance come the unattached women.

8. As you know, Master Tara Singh was released as a result of an order of the High Court.[5] I regret to say that his activities have not been desirable since his release.[6] Efforts are made to

4. The conference meeting from 11 to 13 December made recommendations covering schemes of house building, financial assistance, vocational training, care and maintenance of old and infirm persons and homeless women and children as part of the future policy of rehabilitation of displaced persons from West Pakistan.

5. Arrested on 7 September 1950, he was released on 29 November 1950.

6. Addressing a meeting on 3 December at Amritsar, Master Tara Singh accused the Congress of creating a rift between Hindus and Sikhs for political reasons. He repeated his demand for a Punjabi-speaking province and demanded dismissal of the Congress Government and imposition of Governor's rule in Punjab. On 13 December, addressing a Sikh congregation in Delhi, he reiterated that the "Sikh religion today is in great danger and in order to protect it, great sacrifices are needed." On 13 December, he denounced the introduction of the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament.

bring about strange alliances,[7] the only common factor being a dislike of the present Government and its policies. Looking back over the last twenty years or more, one is struck by the extreme poverty of Sikh leadership in thought and action. Everybody knows the fine quality of the Sikhs. They are excellent soldiers, good farmers and fine mechanics and craftsmen. In spite of this very good material they have repeatedly allowed themselves to be misled, and unfortunately, even past experience does not teach wisdom. I refer, of course, to some Sikhs and not all.

9. Recent judgments of some High Courts have made us think about our Constitution.[8] Is it adequate in its present form to meet the situation we have to face? We must accept fully the judgements of our superior courts, but if they find that there is a lacuna in the Constitution, then we have to remedy that. This matter is under consideration. There has also been a tendency on the part of some High Court judges to indulge in strong criticism of Government not only from the Bench but from other platforms. This has led sometimes to an attempt to a reply to that criticism in Parliament.[9] Both are unfortunate and a controversy between a Government and a High Court is unbecoming and harmful. Both, therefore, have to function with restraint and proper decorum. The independence of the

7. The Akali Dal was divided into two factions The group led by Master Tara Singh had invited the Communists and others to join the Akali Dal to form an anti-Congress front. The Hindu Mahasabha made its support to Tara Singh conditional on his not pressing the demand for a linguistic province.

8. The High Courts in Bombay and Punjab had declared the orders detaining a person without trial and restricting Master Tara Singh's freedom of speech respectively as inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution. On 13 October 1950, the Patna High Court held as "unconstitutional and void" a section of the Press Act as it restricted the freedom of publication guaranteed by the Constitution.

9. During the debate in Parliament from 29 November to 3 December on the Delhi Premises (Requisition and Eviction) Amendment Bill, N.V. Gadgil, for example, observed that "if the Judiciary extends its jurisdiction and pronounces that a particular piece of legislation is undesirable or unreasonable, it is going far beyond its legitimate jurisdiction."

judiciary has been emphasized in our Constitution and we must guard it as something precious. But if our judges make pronouncements on controversial political problems out of court, then controversy is bound to arise.

10. The new situation on our frontiers has led us to reconsider our defence position in regard to those frontiers. I do not think there is the slightest danger of a military invasion from or via Tibet. But it is always possible for trouble-makers to come across and we have to be on our guard against them. We have taken some steps already in regard to this and we propose to take more as occasion demands.

11. This raises the whole question of our defence forces and, more especially, our army. Our people appear to be developing what might be called a military outlook.[10] They demand more and more in the way of armed forces and at the same time call incessantly for economy. Any major dent in our expenditure can only come from the defence forces. And so we have to face this difficult problem of increasing our army, as some people demand, and reducing the expenditure upon it, as other or the same people say. Obviously we cannot have it both ways. Defence does not consist merely of uniformed men marching with guns. It consists of an industrial background also as well as adequate resources and a high morale among the people. We have to develop our industry or else we do not progress or increase our resources.

12. We realize perfectly that we can take no risks about defence and have to keep a first-rate army and an efficient air

10. On 7 December, S.P. Mookerjee, speaking in Parliament, called for India adopting a more "realistic approach" towards her defence needs as he felt that the situation on the northern frontiers "affected not only the people of Tibet, but also India's security," and he therefore urged that India be made "militarily strong." On the same day, Kripalani stressed the need for making India's "military and industrial potential strong." Also *The Statesman* in its editorial of 9 December made a plea for "conscription" and more "expenditure on civil defence."

force and navy. At the same time, we feel that we should, considering all the circumstances, make some reduction in the army.[11] This is a brave step, which possibly might not be understood by many of our people, more especially in present circumstances. But in the larger view of things, we feel that this is a right step even from the point of view of efficiency in the defence forces, and much more so, from the point of view of saving some money for other purposes. There have been many protests from State Governments at the disbandment of some temporary units.[12] Those protests were often justified from the point of view of that State. And yet I am sure that if the overall picture was considered by the Government of the State concerned, they would agree to the step we are taking.

13. We keep our defence forces for defence, as their name implies. This is important to remember as our whole policy depends on how we look at this. We are not thinking in terms of aggression anywhere. Our defence consists in guarding our widespread frontiers. It includes the defence of Bhutan and Sikkim, which are our protected States. In a wider sense it also includes the defence of Nepal, which is an independent country. The real defence of India must lie on the main range of the Himalayas and we cannot afford to allow an enemy to cross over even into Nepal, for that would endanger the security of India. I made this clear in Parliament the other day.[13]

14. I am afraid that our relations with Pakistan continue to be as strained as ever and we have made no progress in regard to any of the major points of dispute. We published the long-drawn-out correspondence between our Government and that

11. The Government had decided to demobilize 50,000 men from the army.

12. In his letter of 25 November 1950, B.C. Roy recorded his strong protest in regard to the proposed drastic cuts in the defence force. He feared that the decision to disband state troops of Cooch-Behar and Tripura would result in the disbanded soldiers joining hands with the Communists.

13. In a statement on foreign policy on 6 December 1950.

of Pakistan, and you must have seen that.[14] Since the publication, there had been further letters [15] which will be published soon. They do not carry the matter any further. But there is one gain and that is a statement by the Prime Minister of Pakistan that Pakistan would not attack India.[16] On our part, we made a similar statement very clearly a year ago and we stick to it.[17] Thus, so far as India is concerned we are committed not to attack any country unless we are ourselves attacked.

15. In the course of the last fortnight, a treaty was signed with Sikkim.[18] The situation in Nepal has been rather static. The insurgents continue to be active in a relatively small way on the border regions of Nepal. But even these activities have a powerful effect on the Government there. It is obvious that the people of Nepal are eager for reform and changes and are not at all anxious that the present Government should continue as it is. I made a brief statement about Nepal in Parliament.[19] This was to the effect that we are continuing to recognize the old King and that we thought major reforms were essential for the peace and stability of Nepal, in which we were so intensely interested. We are interested also in Nepal remaining an independent State. Some people imagine that all this trouble in Nepal is due to our intrigues and that we want to merge it with India. This is completely false.

16. We want Nepal as an independent State, but I also made it clear in Parliament that we do not welcome the interference

14. Released on 22 November 1950.

15. Nehru had replied on 11 December 1950 to a letter of 27 November from Liaquat Ali Khan.

16. On 27 November 1950.

17. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1. p.215.

18. By the treaty signed at Gangtok on 5 December 1950, Sikkim was to remain a protectorate of India, with autonomy in internal affairs, and India was to be responsible for its defence, external relations and communications; and the trade between the two was not to be subject to any import or transit duties.

19. On 6 December 1950.

of foreign countries there. This is the only policy that any Government in India can pursue, because of the geography of Nepal and her other contacts with India.

17. We have recently had visits from some representatives of the Nepalese Government and we had long talks with them in which we explained our position clearly.[20] Those talks have not borne any fruit yet and we are still waiting for some kind of a reply to our proposals. We have made it clear that we intend to continue recognizing the old King, who is at present our guest in Delhi. Any other course will prevent the return of peace and stability to Nepal. It would mean an attempt to consolidate the present autocratic and rather extraordinary regime in that country. We have tried to find a middle way of peace which would not bring too great a break in the Government of Nepal and which would at the same time ensure democratic reform. We are anxious that the civil war there should stop as soon as possible and a fair settlement arrived at.

18. Pakistan and Nepal are important for us because they are our neighbours. Tibet is also important for the same reason. But the fate of the world, for the moment, is tied up with events in the Far East of Asia. Slowly, but almost inevitably, we seem to march towards a major disaster - World War III. I do not want to say that war is inevitable and I do not believe it. And yet gradually the lamps of peace go out. You will have seen that our representative at Lake Success, Shri B.N. Rau, has been making persistent efforts to find some way to avoid war.[21]

20. After talks for a fortnight in New Delhi, the Nepalese delegation left for home on 10 December 1950.

21. On 5 December, B.N. Rau secured the support of 13 Asian and Arab representatives for an appeal that none of the countries involved in the conflict should cross the 38th parallel. The Chinese Government stated on 9 December that the appeal was receiving their careful consideration. On 14 December, the General Assembly approved a resolution of 13 nations setting up a three-man group to "determine the basis on which a satisfactory ceasefire in Korea can be arranged." On 16 December, China said that Truman's statement on the atom bomb, the joint communique issued by Truman and Attlee, and the proclamation of a state of emergency in the U.S. were all evidence that the "ceasefire-first" proposal for Korea was a "trap."

I think that all countries, however much they may differ from each other, believe in the sincerity of India's desire for peace and have some appreciation for her efforts to this end, even though they might not agree with them. I fear that our efforts have not met with much success.

19. The United Kingdom has often agreed with us in these matters and supported us to some extent.[22] But, unfortunately, public declarations become more and more warlike and aggressive. The tone of President Truman's broadcast two days ago does not encourage hopes of peace.[23] Neither does the unyielding attitude of the Chinese Government.[24] In this particular matter, the main protagonists are the U.S.A. and China. Of course, behind China is the policy and strength of the U.S.S.R., just as the U.S.A. have other Powers lining up with them. The latest news is that General Wu,[25] the representative of the new China, who had gone to Lake Success, has asked for his return visa to China. That is a fateful step, for that means a break and an end to the efforts thus far made for a settlement. The war will go on in Korea and that

22. On 6 December, Britain supported the proposal for a ceasefire in Korea and welcomed India's efforts in this direction. But, on the same day, Attlee declared that there would be no appeasement of the Chinese Communists and Britain would stand by the side of the U.S. in Korea.

23. Truman announced on 15 December plans for increasing defence preparedness, as the U.S. was in grave danger "created by the rulers of the Soviet Union."

24. On 4 December, China announced her terms for a ceasefire in Korea as: (1) restoration of the Communist regime north of the 38th parallel and an early all-Korea election; (2) withdrawal of the U.S. 7th Fleet from Taiwan waters and the cessation of further U.S. aid to General Chiang Kai-shek; and (3) immediate admission to the United Nations of People's Republic of China. On 16 December, she insisted on a political solution in Korea, and not a "ceasefire-first", as was proposed by the three-member commission.

25. General Wu Hsiu-Chuan (Wu Xiuchuan) (b. 1908). Joined Red Army, 1932; participated in the Long March, 1934-35; joined foreign service, 1949; led a delegation to the United Nations, November-December 1950; Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1951-52 and 1966; Ambassador to Yugoslavia, 1955-58. He left New York on 19 December 1950 when a ceasefire formula proposed by a three-member commission was being finalized.

war has already ceased to be a Korean war. At any moment it may spread to China, and that again will, in all likelihood, lead to a conflagration in other parts of the world.

20. The situation in Europe does not appear to be so critical as in the Far East. But recent developments there also tend towards a crisis.[26] This will centre round the proposal for German rearmament. Germany, you will remember, was not allowed to have an army or even manufacture war material.[27] This was the decision after the War. But now fear of Russia is inducing the U.S.A. to think of arming the Germans. This has been accepted by the U.K., and after long argument and most reluctantly, by France also.[28] France has not yet shed its fear of German armies which have on three occasions during the last eighty years or less ravaged France. So, France was reluctant, but pressure of circumstances, as well as from other countries, and a greater fear overcoming the lesser, induced her to give this consent. On the other hand, the Soviet Union has always made it clear that it will not tolerate German rearmament.[29] Russia has enough cause to remember German armies marching and destroying vast areas in the Soviet Union. Thus this question of German rearmament is a matter on which there might well be a conflict.

21. The Korean war has led military strategists and war departments furiously to think. It has upset many preconceived

26. West German participation in the defence of Western Europe, was discussed by the members of NATO from 15 September. Though initially opposed by France, it was finally agreed upon on 16 December.

27. This had been decided at the Potsdam Conference held from 17 July to 2 August 1945.

28. On 6 December, the French Government accepted the compromise proposals. This envisaged formation of small-sized 'combat teams' without heavy armaments, in place of divisions of armies, with the condition that the total number of active combatants would not exceed one-fifth of those of the forces of the Atlantic alliance.

29. The Soviet notes to the British, French and the United States Governments on 3 November and 15 December 1950 conveyed Soviet disapproval of German rearmament.

ideas. It was thought at the end of the last World War that air power was dominant and could stop, at least, any invading army and perhaps even bring about a victory. The atomic bomb was supposed to be overwhelming in its results. Now grave doubts have arisen about this line of thought, for in Korea almost one-sided air warfare on a big scale and widespread bombing, involving tremendous destruction, did not make too much difference to advancing armies. So, the importance of air power diminished somewhat and the importance of the old land army increased. This has a powerful effect on the world balance of power, for the major land armies today are in the Soviet Union and in China.

22. It is exceedingly difficult to prophesy as to what will happen, but it may be said that because of fear of world war, any major step leading to it will be avoided as long as possible. Yet the drift continues and no man knows when this drift may end in a plunge. We have to be wary so that whatever development takes place, does not upset us and does not make us lose our heads. We must be prepared for all consequences. That means not only physical preparedness, but much more so a mental state. That means also a disciplined nation.

23. As I have written to you already, I intend going to London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference at the beginning of the New Year. It is difficult to think of leaving India just at this stage when so many problems upset us and so many new burdens have to be carried. But I feel I must attend this conference. I shall go with the confidence that my colleagues at the Centre and in the States will carry the burden of the day wisely and with courage.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
31 December, 1950

My dear Chief Minister,

Tomorrow I am leaving Delhi for Bangalore and, after a brief stay there, I leave for England. Tomorrow is New Year's Day. That day marks not only the end of the month and of the year but also the end of the half century. We stand poised in the middle of this twentieth century, which has already brought two World Wars and many smaller ones, and which now looks apprehensively and fearfully at the prospect of a third world war.

2. In our own country we have had shock after shock and it would almost appear that some perverse fate was pursuing us, or the gods wished to punish us. What a succession of calamities we have had and, to top them all, we lost a great captain of our forces who, with consummate skill, had steered the bark of India between many rocks and through stormy seas. The seas continue to be stormy and new rocks appear all round us, and we wanted that stout heart and strong arm more than ever before to meet these new crises.

3. I am going to England to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference and the principal subject for discussion will no doubt be the world situation, and more particularly the situation in the Far East. It would be folly to talk in too optimistic a vein when darkness descends upon us and the lights progressively go out. And yet it would not be right either to become gloomy and pessimistic and to lose all hope. There is always hope and there is always time for right effort in a right direction. That effort can never be wasted if it is properly

directed, even though it may not produce the results aimed at. I do not think that the world situation is completely out of hand or beyond repair. But it is a fact that it is an exceedingly dangerous situation and powerful forces are pushing us towards the abyss of world war. It is easy to cast blame on this country or that, and in the prevailing passion of the moment, the other party looks all black and without any redeeming feature. And yet, if we look round the world, where do we find any real desire for war? Everywhere—in Asia, in Europe and in America—there is a passionate desire for avoidance of war. But fear and anger and, to some extent, even considerations of prestige, drive millions of peace-loving people towards war.

4. Thus far the efforts[1] made at Lake Success have failed to find a way out.[2] As you know, our representative, Shri B.N. Rau, has also carried on diplomatic activities to the same end. Perhaps one result has been achieved, in some measure, and that is a general belief in India's bonafides and her desire for peace. That is something gained.

5. There has been much talk of a ceasefire in Korea. But war continues and we appear to be on the verge of a big advance by the Chinese forces, volunteers or regular troops, whatever they might be. If this continues, there is little doubt that the U.N. forces cannot stay very long in Korea, or at any rate, they will be confined to a narrow region. The Chinese Government has made it clear that they will not accept ceasefire unless some previous understanding is arrived at about the general withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea and unless a clear statement is made about the future of Formosa. This

1. The proposals communicated by the three-member ceasefire committee to the Chinese Government on 15 December 1950 were: a total ceasefire with a 20-mile demilitarized zone with 38th parallel as its southern limit; no side to reinforce its troops; exchange of prisoners of war on equal basis; and the U.N. General Assembly to confirm ceasefire arrangements and arrange the movement of refugees.

2. The Chinese Government rejected the ceasefire proposals on 22 December 1950.

statement, according to them, must reiterate the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations, which promised to hand back Formosa or Taiwan to China. The actual handing over need not take place immediately and can be discussed. But the principle must be admitted here and now. Formosa indeed has become the crux of the question in the Far East. On this question there is even a difference of opinion between the U.K. and the U.S.A.

6. The basic fact of the situation in the Far East is the emergence of China as a strong, stable and centralized State. China is undoubtedly a great power in every sense of the term today, and the Chinese Government and people want to be treated as such. Because they have not been so treated, they are angry and resentful and are not prepared to talk. According to them, there has been a piling up of insults on them and all their efforts to enter the U.N. or to deal with the Korean crisis, which affects them so intimately, have been checked and opposed by some other Powers. With the past memory of colonialism, they are in no mood to accept anybody's patronage.

7. It is important to remember this Chinese background. The whole balance of power has changed not only in the Far East but in the world because of this new China. Very gradually a realization of this is coming to the Western countries; but the process is slow. It will have to be much faster, if disaster is to be avoided.

8. As I have told you previously, there is no foreseeable danger on India's frontiers. Indeed our Ambassador in China as well as the Ambassador for Burma[3] have been assured that China has no territorial ambitions. There has been some mention of the old map of China which shows some parts of

3. Myint Thein.

India and Burma as being parts of China.[4] It has been pointed out to us by the Chinese authorities that these maps are old maps and they do not rely upon them. They have had no time to draw new maps. We have been further told by the Chinese Government that they do not think there are many problems between Asian countries like China, India and Burma, which cannot be solved through normal diplomatic channels. I think this assurance expresses correctly their present intentions.

9. In America, a state of emergency has been declared[5] and many other steps have been taken to switch on the entire industrial effort towards war production.[6] Steps are being taken with speed to increase considerably the present colossal figures of production. This is a danger point and, naturally, creates an atmosphere of coming war. It has other consequences also. If the mighty production machine of America is turned towards war production, then it will not be able to supply the needs of other countries in terms of capital goods. If there is any surplus in the U.S., this will go to Western Europe, which is considered the first priority from the point of view of a possible war. We are, therefore, not likely to get much or anything in the shape of machinery , etc., from the U.S. Inflationary tendencies will be more and more marked all over the world. The U.S. will buy up raw material in all parts of the world and pay heavily for it. Thus prices will go up and will affect India too. While we work

4. H.V. Kamath mentioned in Parliament that Chinese maps showed China's south-eastern boundaries extending up to the Brahmaputra river. Nehru replied on 20 November 1950 that "our maps show that the MacMahon Line is our boundary and that is our boundary – map or no map. That fact remains and we stand by that boundary and we will not allow anybody to come across that boundary."

5. Truman declared a national emergency on 17 December 1950 so that the U.S. could marshal its strength to meet the threat of "Communist world conquest."

6. Measures were taken to restrict supplies of certain items for civilian use and Government departments alone were allowed to import such items as rubber and latex so that they were used for defence purposes only. An agency was also set up to fix prices and wages in industry.

for peace, we have to be prepared for all contingencies and the greatest amount of preparation is necessary on the economic front.

10. In Nepal, there have been serious developments during the past two weeks. The insurgents of the Nepal Congress have captured large areas in the Terai,[7] and in Kathmandu itself there have been great demonstrations in favour of King Tribhuvan. This is something quite unique in Nepal's history. It is clear that the present Rana regime is cracking up. But a vested interest does not easily let go. I made a statement in regard to Nepal in Parliament.[8] In this I made three points: (1) that King Tribhuvan should continue to be King. We attached importance to this because we saw no way of returning to peace unless this was acknowledged. Our second point was in regard to a Constituent Assembly.[9] The third point was about an interim Government containing an adequate number of popular Ministers.[10] The Nepalese Government have sent an answer,[11] which is not satisfactory. They still insist on

7 Jhapa was captured on 15th, Bhojpur, Chainpur, Bingla, Khotany on 18th, Biratnagar on 23rd, and Teratham on 30th December

8 On 21 December, Nehru informed Parliament that the Prime Minister of Nepal had, in a reply of 18 December to the memorandum containing the proposed draft of the constitutional changes forwarded to his Government on 8 December, asked for more time to consider the proposed changes. Nehru added that while India was not in a hurry, yet, in view of the worsening situation in the world, it "is our firm conviction that the longer political reform and a satisfactory settlement are delayed in Nepal, the greater the danger to Nepal's security and internal tranquility."

9. The Indian Government suggested that an elected Constituent Assembly should meet at the earliest to draft a constitution for Nepal. India would be glad to assist in working out the details of the constitution.

10 It was suggested that the interim government's cabinet, working on the principle of joint responsibility, should comprise members of the Rana family and an adequate number of "representatives of popular opinion, enjoying public confidence." The Prime Minister should be selected from among the former.

11. Major-General Bijaya and Sardar N.M. Dixit of the Nepalese foreign ministry came for discussions to Delhi on 25 December with the Nepal Government's proposals.

continuing with their child prince as King. They agree to a Constituent Assembly. But their ideas of an interim Government do not conform to ours.[12] We have made all this clear to them again and there the matter stands.[13] The position is such that delay in coming to a settlement will probably weaken the Rana regime still further and the demands of the insurgents will increase. We have pointed this out clearly to the Nepalese Government.

11. You must be aware of the organizational changes that have taken place in the Government of India and our Central Ministries.[14] Owing to Sardar Patel's death, a very serious gap was created in the Cabinet. I decided not to add to the Cabinet and I induced Shri Rajagopalachari and Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar to take up respectively the portfolios of Home and States. The three Ministries of Industry and Supply, Commerce, and Works, Mines and Power, have been reshuffled and grouped differently.[15] I think that this new group is more logical and scientific and, of course, it helps our economy drive.

12. You will have noticed from my statements in Parliament that we are in the process of reducing our Army somewhat.[16] This is rather curious when all world is rushing ahead to add to its defence apparatus. We have decided to reduce expenditure in our Defence Services a little chiefly on the grounds of

12. They proposed a cabinet consisting of nine Ministers of whom only three would be the representatives of the people. They also did not accept the principle of joint responsibility.

13. The Nepalese delegation left for Kathmandu on 1 January 1951.

14. On 26 December 1950.

15. Harekrishna Mahtab, Minister of Industries became Minister of Commerce and Industry; N.V. Gadgil, Minister of Works, Mines and Power became Minister of Works, Production and Supply; and Sri Prakasa, Minister of Commerce, became Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research.

16. Nehru announced on 21 December the Government's decision to reduce the size of the Indian Army without impairing its fighting strength. Reduction was to be effected in areas "not so well trained" or "equipped."

economy. But we have kept in view the efficiency of the Army for such demands as might be made upon it. I do not think the proposed reduction in the Army will make any difference to its fighting quality.

13. Food is still problem No. 1 for us. We are making strenuous efforts to get food from all parts of the world, including China. But enough shipping is not available. That creates a big bottleneck. I fear that we are going to have a hard time during the next six months or more. Blame is cast on the Central Government and some of this criticism might be justified. But I feel that there is not enough realization in the States of the enormous difficulties that the Central Government has to face. As I have said, we are trying to get as much as we can from abroad and we shall continue our efforts to this end. States must realize, however, that it does not help much to demand more and more, when that more is not available either in India or abroad. It is essential that our rationing system should continue. To break it up would be most unfortunate and it might not be possible to reintroduce it easily.

14. We have had a visit in Delhi[17] from the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies.[18] During his brief stay here, we discussed with him many problems of common interest. I shall meet him again in London soon.

15. You will have noticed in the newspapers that the Pakistan Government has been insisting on the inclusion of the Kashmir issue in the agenda of the Prime Ministers' Conference in London. We heard about this today in a message from Mr. Attlee. To include such an issue in the agenda would be entirely opposed to the practice and convention governing such conferences and Mr. Attlee has expressed his inability to do so.

17. On 26-27 December 1950.

18. Sir Robert Gordon Menzies (1894-1978). Australian lawyer and politician; Attorney-General, 1934-38; Prime Minister, 1939-41; Leader of Opposition, 1943-49; Prime Minister, 1949-66.

But he suggested to Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan that all the Prime Ministers might meet informally and consider Kashmir. I have informed him that while I am prepared to discuss this matter with him or with any Prime Minister informally and separately, I do not agree to this kind of round table discussion even though it might be called informal, by all the Prime Ministers together. That would be a bad precedent and would lead to no result.

16. We have to take an overall view of the situation. This involves an appreciation of the international situation and of the economic position in India. The international situation, whether war comes or not, will continue to be a very difficult one and we cannot rely upon getting supplies from abroad in any quantity. We are thus thrown upon our resources and we must plan more or less accordingly. Of course, we shall try to get our essential needs met as far as possible from supplies from abroad. We are trying to do that in regard to food. But we have to be prepared for any contingency. If an adequate supply of foodgrains is not forthcoming from abroad, the only possible way to meet the situation is to spread out the burden all over the country and for all of us to share in it. It is not possible, and certainly not desirable, for a part in India to suffer terribly while others are better off. Nor can we follow the path of least resistance and reduce our commitments by putting an end to rationing. That might well lead to disaster. The only way to meet such a situation is to spread our deficit of food, such as it may be, over the whole country. It does not help very much to discuss past policies and errors. We have to meet a difficult situation and we cannot throw up our hands because it is difficult.

17. Coming to the economic situation in the country, we have to realize that this may well grow worse because of international factors, inflation,[19] etc. We have to explore all possible avenues

19. The general index of wholesale prices, with 1939 as base year, was 384.7 in January 1950 and 416.6 in December 1950.

of economy and of increasing our revenues. The first thing to do is not to take any step which might lead to reduction in our revenues. Of course, any addition would have to be carefully thought out so as not to result in a paralysis of the economic system.

18. In this connection, I should like you to consider the question of prohibition.[20] This is a delicate matter about which there is strong feeling. But we are dealing with a very critical situation and we have to face that situation frankly. In those States where there is no prohibition at present, it would be unwise to introduce it at this stage. In other States where there is prohibition in some measure, it would be desirable to have a full enquiry made as to the results of it. Some of these results cannot be measured, but others can be. For instance, how far has illicit distillation proceeded? What is the general effect on health? There is always a danger in social reform of doing something which, while meeting one evil, produces other and greater evils. This is quite apart from the financial aspect of the question, though finance cannot be ignored. Therefore, I would strongly suggest that a proper enquiry be made in this matter so that we may know what the facts are. On the basis of those facts decisions can then be taken.

19. All our development schemes and social reform schemes are suffering terribly because of lack of money. Take housing for instance. That seems to me almost of first importance, next to food itself, in order to raise not only the physical well-being of our people, but also their moral tone. We cannot expect any moral standards or efficient work when people have no decent conditions of living, and yet we can do very little about housing because of financial difficulties. There are many other social services and cultural projects which we could well take in hand, if we had the resources to do so. In England, in spite of the

20. Nehru favoured review of the Government policy on prohibition as the States which had introduced it had lost revenues without dissuading people from drinking.

great difficulties created by the War, the Government has insisted on carrying on with vast social projects. You all know about the British Health Insurance Scheme,[21] which is a very costly business, but which has brought relief to vast numbers of people. Even in regard to purely cultural activities, like encouragement of national theatres, etc., the U.K. Government has gone ahead attaching importance to them. Sir Stafford Cripps told me last year that whatever the financial difficulty, he did not wish the cultural level of his people to be lowered or to sacrifice tomorrow for today's need.

20. During the last forty-five years of my acquaintance with British conditions, I have noticed a progressive and marked change in the drinking habits of people there. They drink much less and one hardly sees a drunken man anywhere. What the reasons for this are, I do not quite know. One of them certainly is the very high cost of alcoholic drinks. Another, I think, is a certain change in social values and standards. This change might be said to have taken place in several countries of Europe. At the same time, it may interest you to know that the revenue from duties on alcoholic drinks in the U.K. is very great. I believe that the annual revenue now from duties on alcoholic drinks as well as various kinds of tobacco, including cigarettes, etc., in the U.K. is 900 million pounds. This is a colossal sum and it is largely on the basis of this that the U.K. has carried on its numerous educational and cultural activities.

21. We cannot base any activity on money derived from evil sources. That is perfectly true. But what exactly is an evil and how do we measure it? There are social evils of varying degrees. Today we have to meet the very serious evil of black-marketing, which from a social point of view is much worse than individual lapses. Poverty and the effects of poverty are a terrible evil.

21. The National Health Service Act, 1946, which became operational in July 1948, provided for the financing of free medical treatment by the State to everyone. This was an improvement on the National Insurance Act of 1911 which restricted free treatment to those earning less than £ 160 per annum. In the first year, the new scheme cost the State £ 400 million.

Then again what may be considered a social evil in one country may not be so in another. We pride ourselves upon our high moral standards and yet I think it may be said with truth that the standards in England in many ways are higher. Apparently, moral standards in this country are more connected with eating and drinking than with anything else.

22. You must have been following the proceedings of the conference of some rulers held in Bombay recently.[22] This has no great importance and we need not worry too much about it. But, nevertheless, it is a bad sign and we have to make it clear that no individual in India, whoever he may be, can challenge the authority of the State or of Parliament. It is obvious that some of these rulers are intriguing and trying to create trouble. They are not in a position to do much, but anyone can create a little trouble. So far as we are concerned, we are not going to tolerate any defiance of the State's authority.

23. On this eve of the New Year, I look round and see a multitude of problems and difficulties. I do not feel in the slightest degree despondent. Rather I feel that this is a challenge to us all and that we are going to meet it with firmness and wisdom. But we can only do so if we all pull together and forget our petty differences. Whether it is the Congress or the governmental apparatus of the State, we have to pull together. It is time we forgot all the factors that separate us and put us in different compartments, and thought only of the country as a whole and of the dangers and perils that surround us. I appeal to you and to your colleagues for help and co-operation in this great task that confronts us. I am sure I shall have that not only from you, but from vast numbers of people in this country. This New Year will test us to the

22. The conference held on 26 and 27 December under the chairmanship of the Gaekwad of Baroda pledged loyalty to India but noted with regret that the hopes and aspirations of the Princes had been shattered as they had been denied privileges and honours. The rulers also concluded that the merger of States had widened the gulf between the Princes and their peoples.

uttermost. We will survive this test or any other challenge that may come to us if we pull together and revive somewhat the spirit that brought freedom to this country.

24. In this hope and belief I send you my greetings for this New Year of hard work and struggle and, I hope, achievement.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
1 February, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing after one full month. During this month I have been away from India for nearly three weeks. Soon after my return to Delhi,[1] I had to go to Ahmedabad for the meeting of the All India Congress Committee.[2] I returned today.

2. As you know, I went to London to attend the Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers.[3] This Conference was largely concerned with the international situation. The tempo of events has been fast since then and much that was said and done at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference is now past history. Nevertheless, it might interest you to have a brief account of what transpired at this Conference and the part that India played in it.

3. First of all, there was no discussion about the Kashmir issue at the Conference, though references were made to it. It was made quite clear that no such issue could be raised at the Conference. Subsequently, some private talks took place about Kashmir.[4] Secondly, no discussion took place at the Conference about any defence measures. There was a discussion about the general military situation both in the Far East and in Europe.

1. On 21 January 1951.
2. Held from 29 to 31 January 1951.
3. Held from 4 to 12 January 1951.
4. The Prime Ministers of India, Pakistan, Britain, Canada, Australia, Sri Lanka and New Zealand informally discussed the Kashmir question several times without being able to make any new proposals.

Apart from the Conference itself, there was a meeting of some Prime Ministers who were chiefly interested in the position of the Middle East.[5] I believe that certain discussions relating to defence took place there. I was not present at that meeting.

4. The discussions at the Prime Ministers' Conference related chiefly to the Far East situation, European situation and to economic matters. As is usual at such conferences, no formal resolutions were passed. Press communiques were issued from time to time and, on the last day, a kind of declaration or manifesto[6] was issued, which no doubt you must have seen. In addition to this, however, the question of sending instructions to our representatives at Lake Success also had to be discussed, as the First (Political) Committee of the U.N. was then meeting at Lake Success and considering various resolutions relating to the Korean crisis.[7] Instructions had, of course, to be sent separately by each country to its representative, but an attempt was made to have, as far as possible, a similar approach. In fact there was a great deal of similarity in the instructions that were sent, though the emphasis varied slightly. It was as a result of these instructions that the three-man committee framed their

5. On 9 January 1951, Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, informed the Conference that Egypt had demanded withdrawal of the British troops from the Suez Canal zone and Sudan's merger with Egypt. He also spoke of the efforts being made to improve the economic and social standards in many countries of the region.

6. The declaration, taking note of the current political, military, economic and social problems, laid stress on restoring peace in Korea, and stated that "we of the Commonwealth recognize that peace and prosperity of the free world cannot be assured while millions live in poverty. We are, therefore, resolved, while keeping our own economies strong, to promote economic and social development in the underdeveloped countries."

7. The Political Committee of the General Assembly reconvened in New York from 3 January 1951 and heard a detailed report from B.N. Rau on the failure of the ceasefire committee's negotiations with the Beijing Government.

principles for a peaceful settlement of the Korean question.[8] These principles were subsequently adopted by the First Committee of the U.N.[9] It should be noted that the U.S.A. as well as most other countries voted for this resolution in the First Committee.[10] All the Commonwealth countries voted for it. Our representative, Shri B.N. Rau, however, made it clear how he interpreted certain parts of the resolution.[11] This interpretation, I might add, was generally accepted by the Commonwealth Conference, though in the First Committee only Shri B.N. Rau made this clear.

5. To go back a little. The general position we had to face was more or less as follows:

It was admitted that the North Koreans had committed aggression to begin with. At the same time, it was, I believe, the general opinion that if the People's Republic of China had been

8. On 11 January, the ceasefire committee submitted a new formula designed to meet some of the demands set forth by Beijing. The plan had five parts: (1) an immediate ceasefire; (2) a political meeting for restoring peace; (3) withdrawal by stages of foreign troops, with "appropriate arrangements" for the Korean people regarding their Government; (4) arrangements for unification and administration of Korea; and (5) a conference, after the ceasefire, of the United Kingdom, the United States, the Soviet Union, and People's China, "to settle Far Eastern problems" including the status of Formosa and China's representation in the United Nations.

9. On 13 January 1951 by fifty votes to seven.

10. Sir Gladwyn Jebb of Britain expressed the view that the plan offered "in clear and reasonable terms" the conditions which might lead to settlement. Warren Austin of the United States declared that "we support this plan in accordance with the principles embodied in it." France also asked to be associated with any negotiations which might be initiated.

11. Rau said that the implementation of the ceasefire plan should be monitored by a small body and the ceasefire effected immediately so that the implementation of the other proposals was not hindered. He also stressed that the question of Formosa should be settled in "conformity with existing international obligations, i.e., the Potsdam and Cairo declarations."

admitted to the U.N. previously, in all probability, there would have been no trouble in Korea and the matter would have been thrashed out in the U.N. itself. The North Korean invasion of South Korea met with considerable success till the landing of the U.N. troops took place at Inchon near Seoul. Soon after this the question arose whether the U.N. forces, which meant mainly the U.S.A. troops, should cross the 38th parallel or not. You will remember that our Ambassador in Peking was told definitely that any crossing of the 38th parallel by the U.S.A. troops would not be tolerated by the Chinese Government, as they would consider this a prelude to an invasion of Manchuria in China.[12] This message was conveyed by us to the U.K. and U.S.A.[13] Nevertheless, the 38th parallel was crossed. About two weeks later, the North Korean troops, aided by Chinese forces (who are described as volunteers by the Chinese Government), attacked the U.S.A. forces and drove them back.

6. This created a dangerous situation for the U.N. forces and there was a good deal of heart-searching as to whether the 38th parallel should have been crossed or not. It became patent that somebody had erred greatly. General MacArthur had been so much in the wrong as to say forty-eight hours before this major reverse, that the war was practically ended and his forces would be home for Christmas.[14] This could only be due to a complete lack of information of the position or some other major error. Anyhow, it was generally recognized that the crossing of the 38th parallel had been a grievous mistake. Almost every person concerned denied responsibility for it and cast the blame on others.[15] Even General MacArthur stated that it was not at his

12. See *ante*, p. 218.

13. See *ante*, p. 218.

14. See *ante*, p. 275.

15. On 3 December 1950, the British Defence Minister said that General MacArthur had gone beyond the objectives set for the campaign as understood by Britain. Though he did not want to criticize the General, he would, however, say that Britain had tried to impress upon the United States that the objectives in Korea should not include carrying the campaign beyond the 38th parallel.

instance that this had been done. It is not yet clear as to who exactly was responsible. In any event, this shows an extreme lack of co-ordination on the side of the U.N. forces and the countries they represented.

7. The result of this was that, in a military sense, the position was very disadvantageous to the U.N. forces and there appeared no probability of anything happening which might better their position. In the normal course they would be driven out of Korea. Even if the war spread to China, it was by no means clear how any effective steps could be taken against China, apart from great destruction by bombing.

8. There was thus a fear of the war spreading to China, which in its turn might well lead to war in Europe and, indeed, world war. The situation was an exceedingly dangerous one. If world war came, Europe was considered to have top priority. Hence it was not easy to divert any considerable forces to the Far East. Even in Europe the position was very difficult from the military point of view.

9. Quite apart from the merits of the case, another difficulty arose. The U.N. did not recognize the People's Government of China, nor did it recognize the North Korean Government. And yet the U.N. issued directions to both these Governments.[16] The reply was that if you do not recognize us, we can hardly be expected to carry out your directions.[17] The Chinese case was that in the name of the U.N., an attempt was going to be made to invade China with the intention of destroying the present regime there. In the past, invasions of China had come via Manchuria and Korea. Manchuria was also vital to China because it was the only industrially developed part of it. The Japanese example was cited. The first step had been possession of Formosa, then Korea, then Manchuria and later attacking China itself. The Chinese

16. See *ante*, p. 279.
17. See *ante*, pp. 296 and 300.

Government therefore attached the greatest importance to Formosa and based its claim on the Cairo declaration of the Great Powers which had been reaffirmed in January 1950 by President Truman.[18] In Formosa, a large army under Marshal Chiang Kai-shek was kept in readiness for the invasion of China and this apparently was receiving help from the U.S. General MacArthur was well-known as a supporter of Marshal Chiang.

10. Attempts had been made in the U.N. to pass a resolution branding China as an aggressor in Korea.[19] Various other resolutions had also been put forward. It was clear, however, that if such a resolution was passed, the chances of any negotiations would fade away. Hence attempts were made to postpone consideration of all such resolutions and to find a way out for a negotiated settlement.[20]

11. It was with this background that we met in London. Every Commonwealth country represented there was anxious to avoid war, because they fully realized that the consequences would be disastrous. The worst sufferer would be Europe. There was thus a strong feeling that every attempt should be made to start negotiations with the Chinese Government. It was recognized that there could be no settlement in Korea if China was left out. Owing to the fact that India was the only major country, apart from the Soviet Union, which had relations with the Chinese Government, India came to play rather an important role in

18. On 12 January 1950. See *ante*, p. 30.

19. The resolution moved on 20 January 1951 by Warren Austin noted that as the Beijing Government had rejected all U.N. proposals for peace and continued to assist "those who were already committing aggression", it should "cease hostilities and withdraw its own forces from Korea." It called upon all U.N. member states to support the U.N. in combating aggression and in bringing about "cessation of hostilities by peaceful means."

20. On 22 January 1951, B.N. Rau asked for a 48-hour adjournment to enable the U.N. Political Committee to study the implications of the latest Chinese proposals. The Soviet Union and Poland on 30 January pleaded for a delay of 24 hours in the voting as they were awaiting instructions on the revised Asian-Arab proposals. The Committee voted against the adjournment.

these preliminary approaches. Two questions stood out. One was Formosa and the other the question of ceasefire, as to whether ceasefire should precede negotiations or should follow certain decisions, chiefly relating to Formosa and withdrawal of foreign armies from Korea. There was not much difference between the attitude of most of the Commonwealth countries and that of China as it subsequently emerged. But there was a big gap between the Chinese attitude and that of the U.S.A., in regard to both ceasefire and Formosa. Even this gap, however, became much less after the adoption of the Principles resolution by the First Committee.

12. The reply of the Chinese Government was worded rather aggressively, but in fact it was very far from rejection.[21] Some of the proposals were accepted and some counter-suggestions were put forward. There was, however, an outcry that China had rejected this offer. It almost appeared that some people were anxious that China should reject it. It was pointed out by us that China had not rejected the offer. Subsequent clarification made this even more evident. Certain questions were put to the Chinese Government by the Canadian Prime Minister through us.[22] The Chinese answer was definitely conciliatory and it appeared that China was anxious to have a settlement by

21. In their reply on 17 January 1951 regarding the five principles approved by the U.N. Political Committee on 13 January, China reiterated that hostilities in Korea could be terminated only through negotiations. Their counter-proposals included: (1) withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea, and Korean affairs to be settled by the Korean people; (2) agenda for negotiations must include withdrawal of U.S. forces from Taiwan; (3) China be given its legitimate seat in the United Nations; (4) a seven-nation conference for negotiations be held in China; and (5) the seven nations should be China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, India and Egypt.

22. Nehru received a message from St. Laurent seeking clarification from the Chinese on: (1) the question of the Chinese representation in the United Nations, (2) the Chinese proposal for withdrawal of troops; and (3) what was meant by priority in time of negotiations for a ceasefire.

negotiation.[23] This was recognized to a large extent by many of the Commonwealth countries including the U.K. But feelings in the U.S.A. ran very high and there was an insistence on passing the aggressor resolution.[24] It seemed to us that it would be tragic in the extreme to take a step just then, when the chances of a settlement were brighter than ever before, which would practically put an end to the idea of negotiation. We tried our utmost, therefore, to prevent any such step being taken and for preliminary negotiations to take place. In this we were supported by a number of Asian countries.[25] However, ultimately the Asian effort was defeated and two days ago, the aggressor resolution was passed.[26]

13. I must confess to a feeling of deep regret and some frustration at this failure of our attempts which, at one time, appeared to be nearing success. The only satisfaction we have is that we took up consistently what we considered the right line. On two occasions previously, namely, the question of recognition of new China and the crossing of the 38th parallel, we have been proved right by subsequent events. I am quite convinced that on this last occasion we acted rightly, both from the point of view of any principle and from the hard test of

23. On 22 January, Rau informed the Political Committee of the clarifications received from Beijing about their proposals: (1) China would ask its volunteers in Korea to withdraw if the principle of withdrawal of foreign troops was accepted; (2) peaceful solution in Korea by negotiations could be in two stages—(a) ceasefire for a limited period so that negotiations could continue, (b) other issues which could then be discussed were how the Korean people would solve their domestic problems and the withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Taiwan under Cairo and Potsdam declarations; and (3) guarantee of the status of People's Republic of China in the United Nations.

24. On 24 January, Acheson called the Chinese reply further evidence of a "contemptuous disregard of a world-wide demand for peace. Now, we must face squarely and soberly the fact that the Chinese Communists have no intention of ceasing their defiance of the United Nations."

25. Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan.

26. On 1 February 1951, the U.N. General Assembly indicted People's China as an aggressor by a vote of 44 to 7, with 9 abstentions. Burma and India were among those who opposed the resolution; Sweden, Yugoslavia, and seven Asian and Arab states abstained.

practical politics. Indeed, many of those countries who voted for the aggressor resolution evidently did so much against their will and under pressure.[27] The Canadian Foreign Minister,[28] voting for this resolution, said that he considered it premature and unwise.

14. It is poor consolation to know that we have acted rightly when the world drifts towards war. Probably no immediate development of a major kind will take place for some time. But the turn that events have taken is certainly in the wrong direction and it is very difficult now to give a different twist to them. The situation in the Far East will progressively grow worse, the war in Korea will continue probably with greater vigour and there is always the possibility of its spreading. This again affects the situation in Europe and the world. The terrible rearmament race will continue and that itself is a provocation to war.

15. In Europe the major question at present is the proposal for the rearmament of Western Germany. This would be admittedly a breach of agreements arrived at. But it is felt by the Western Powers that without a rearmed Western Germany, there will be no effective brake to a Soviet invasion.[29] On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the rearmament of Germany frightens the Soviet Union as well as countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, etc. These countries have experienced the terrible consequences of a German invasion in the past and they wish to take no risks about it in the future. Therefore, the mere act of rearmament of West Germany becomes a vital challenge to the Soviet Union and its associated

27. Nehru believed that Britain and all Commonwealth and European countries were anxious to avoid war, but they also did not wish to isolate the U.S. or to break off with it. Hence their attitude to U.S. was not as forthright as it ought to have been and, in the face of strong U.S. opposition, they compromised.

28. Lester Pearson.

29. On 26 January 1951, Attlee said that the "Russians had raised many thousands of armed men in Germany in paramilitary formations."

countries. The Soviet Union had in fact made this perfectly clear.[30] The Western nations have thus to face a very difficult dilemma. If they do not rearm Germany, then they consider themselves weak against their prospective enemies. If on the other hand they support this rearmament, then this might itself result in war even before the rearmament had proceeded far.

16. It is astonishing how fear and passion are blinding people's minds and leading them into wrong courses. When I talked with leaders in the U.K. and in France, it was patent that they wanted to prevent war and were largely in agreement with the argument that I placed before them. At the same time, they were afraid of their weakness and more particularly of any kind of major disagreement with the U.S. They were thus pulled in two different directions. While the leaders wanted to avoid war, the common people wanted to do so even more. The result of all this has been, for the present, the passing of the aggressor resolution in the U.N. and we shall now have to face the consequences of this very unwise act. So far as India is concerned, we shall naturally continue to follow the policy we have thus far pursued. I believe that, even though we did not succeed, we did produce a powerful impression on most countries. The Western countries were greatly influenced by our attitude, even though they could not ultimately endorse it. China certainly was influenced by us and it was, I think, at least partly due to our efforts that China toned down her demands and came near to negotiations.

17. It is a significant fact that in a matter affecting the Far East of Asia, hardly any Asian country is at all anxious to follow the policy now decided upon by the U.N. Some of these countries were indeed definitely opposed to it. Thus it is mainly the countries of North and South America plus some European countries rather reluctantly, that have laid down this policy. One would have thought that in a matter vitally affecting Asia, the views of Asian countries would have had greater weight.

30. See *ante*, p. 297.



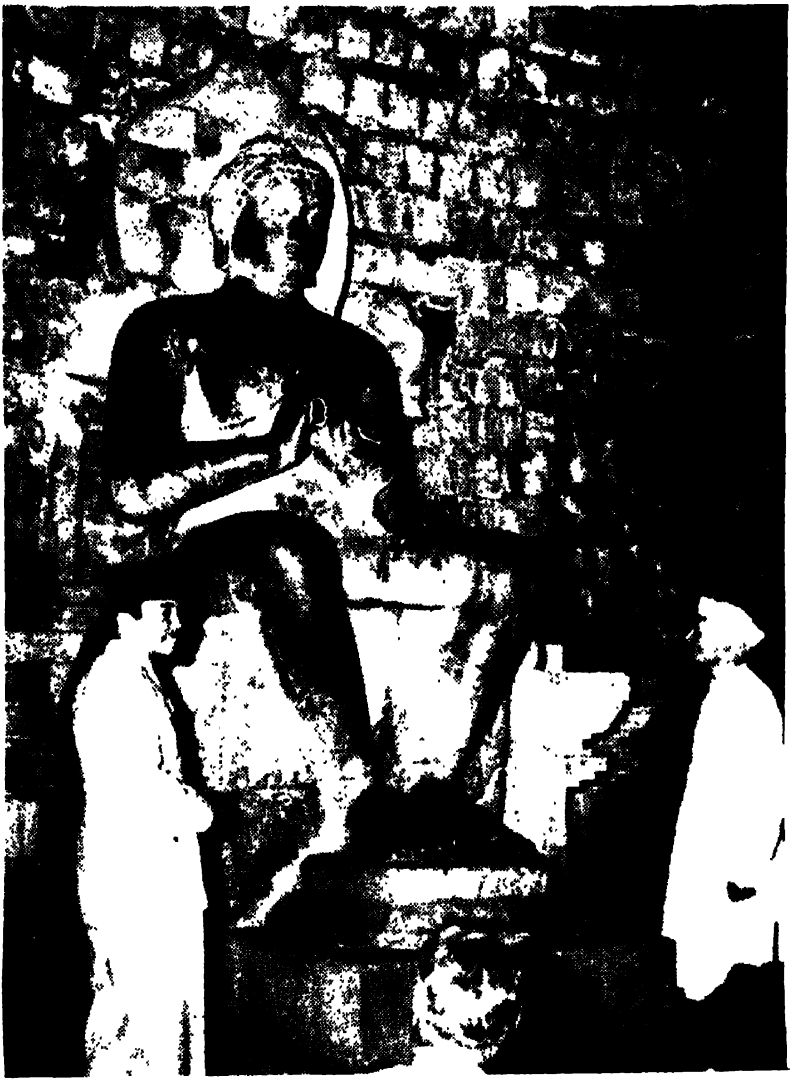
Being sworn in as Prime Minister by President Rajendra Prasad,
6 May 1950



On INS *Delhi en route* to Indonesia, 2 June 1950



With President Soekarno of Indonesia,
Djakarta, June 1950



At Borobudur, 12 June 1950

18. Whether war comes in the future or not, in any event, we live from now onwards in a war atmosphere and with all the energies of many nations turned towards war production. That itself has a powerful influence both politically and economically. In the economic sphere this means very heavy armament expenditure and all raw materials necessary for it to be sucked into the war machine. This will result in much higher prices and inflation. It will also result in capital goods not being available to us or to countries similarly situated. Whatever our attitude might be, we are affected by these developments and have to take stock of them. We have to realize that it is very unsafe to base our economy on foreign help of any kind. We have, therefore, to think more than ever of relying upon ourselves. This is not wholly possible at present and it may not be possible for a number of years. But whether it is possible or not, we have to face that situation and to do our utmost to meet it. There has thus far been too great a tendency to look abroad for help of various kinds. There is no harm in getting help if it is available and provided it does not come in the way of our larger policies. But if that help is not available, then the choice for us becomes limited. We have seen how foreign help almost inevitably develops into foreign interference or foreign pressure to do something which otherwise would not be done.

19. There is the food problem, the most urgent for us today. We have already made arrangements to import a large quantity of foodgrains. In addition, we have asked the U.S. Government to let us have two million tons of foodgrains on easy terms such as deferred payment, etc.[31] It is not yet clear whether the American Congress will agree to this.[32] We shall be happy to

31. On 15 December 1950, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, India's Ambassador, conveyed to the State Department India's request for 2 million tons of grain on a long-term loan basis.

32. On 25 January 1951, the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations declared that action on the Indian request for wheat would be delayed until a sub-committee "looks into the whole question of U.S. relations with India."

accept such help, but even this help would be far too expensive and dangerous if it is at the cost of entanglement in war.

20. I have referred to the food situation. There have been recently cuts in rations on the one hand,[33] and an increase in prices on the other. Both have hit many classes of our people very badly. The cut becomes inevitable, when our stocks are low. We must remember, however, that the rations are not reduced to an extent which impairs the capacity for work, more especially of those who have to do hard physical labour. We must remember also that this critical situation demands from all of us every attempt to get the available food from the producers or their agents or their middle men. There is no doubt that there are plenty of black market foodstuffs in northern India—in Delhi, in East Punjab, partly in the north-western part of the U.P., partly West Bengal. Where does all this come from? Surely there must be an excess left over from procurement and from consumption by the producer to enable it to go into the black market. Could we not get hold of this surplus? I would earnestly request you to try your utmost to do so. This naturally applies only to those States where there is such surplus in people's hands. This is not a theoretical proposition, but something which is most vital for our present and future and we cannot afford to take an academic view. Some people may think that any pressure on the producers in this respect may have bad results in the elections to come. But nothing could have a worse result than a failure of our food policy and the troubles consequent upon it.

21. If foodgrains rations are cut down, we should try to supply, wherever we can and at moderate prices, other foodstuffs including the so-called substitutes as well as vegetables, etc. The prices of these are high. It would be desirable to try to curtail these prices or to have shops where such articles can be sold at reasonable prices. I am anxious that

33. On 19 January 1951, the Government announced a uniform reduction by 25 per cent (9 ounces per adult) in food rations throughout the country.

all of us should realize the gravity of this situation. If we do not meet it satisfactorily, then very serious consequences will flow. We have often talked of dealing with the food problem as if it was a war problem. But in spite of our talk, we have not produced the atmosphere of urgency. We take things in a leisurely fashion and expect someone else, whether it is another State or another country, to come to our help. That is a wrong approach fraught with perils.

22. I need not tell you much about Kashmir. My informal talks in London led to no result, except virulent propaganda by Pakistan. The matter is likely to come up before the Security Council soon.[34] I have made it clear that we are perfectly prepared to have a plebiscite and that we have withdrawn part of our army and are prepared to withdraw more of it from Kashmir, provided the Pakistan forces withdraw and we take such steps as are considered necessary, with the minimum of forces, to protect Kashmir. I do not myself see why this should come in the way of a fair plebiscite.

23. You will have followed the developments in Nepal. Undoubtedly these constitute a great popular victory. The Government of India has no desire to interfere in the affairs of Nepal but circumstances have driven it into a position when its advice is important both from the point of view of the Nepalese Government and those who rebelled against it.[35] We are using our influence so as to bring about a peaceful transition in Nepal. It is of the utmost importance that peace and order should prevail there and a stable government should be

34. On 21 February 1951.

35. On 8 January 1951, the Indian Government and the Nepalese representatives agreed to (1) introduction of democratic reforms by convening the constituent assembly, composed entirely of elected members, to prepare a Constitution for Nepal, (2) formation of an interim government comprising persons who represented popular opinion and followed the principle of joint responsibility, and (3) allowing King Tribhuvan and Mohun Shumshere Jung Bahadur to continue as King and Prime Minister respectively and ensuring considerable weightage to the Rana element in the government.

established. We are anxious to expedite this as, till then, there will be no stability in Nepal. I hope that within the next few days some further steps will be taken. The King of Nepal has decided to return to Kathmandu before long.[36] The immediate thing to be done is for the interim government to be formed and to function. Meanwhile, some trouble continues both on the side of the Nepalese Government and the insurgents.[37] This is not on a big scale now but it comes very much in the way of a re-establishment of security.

24. The U.P. Legislature, after prolonged labour, passed their Zamindari Abolition Bill.[38] This was assented to by the President,[39] as a reference had been made to him by the Governor. As soon as this was done, large numbers of zamindars applied for and got injunctions from the High Court to stop any implementation of this legislation.[40] This raises very important points. Parliament, representing the will of the people, decides on certain essential social reforms. These are

36. On 20 January 1951, King Tribhuvan announced his approval of the proclamation of 8 January and appealed for a ceasefire; and on 28 January he expressed his hope of returning to Kathmandu to help in making the new constitutional changes a success.

37. On 16 January 1951, M.P. Koirala, President of the Nepali Congress, issued an order for a ceasefire in Nepal and appealed to "everyone to assist in the restoration of peace." The members of the Nepali Congress were divided on the issue of implementation of the new political arrangement as they had not participated in any of the negotiations between the Ranas and the Indian Government. A serious situation developed in the western areas where the local leader of the party, K.I. Singh, refused to heed the directive for a ceasefire and continued the armed rebellion.

38. Passed by the Assembly on 10 January; received the Upper House's assent on 16 January 1951.

39. On 24 January 1951.

40. Two benches of the Allahabad High Court sitting separately at Lucknow and Allahabad on 25 January 1951 issued interim injunctions restraining the State Government from taking steps under the U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act. The interim injunction issued by Allahabad High Court restrained the Government from issuing even a notification under the Act while the Lucknow bench restrained the Government from taking possession of properties.

then, by a process of interpretation of the Constitution, held up by the judiciary. The result may well be trouble in the rural areas of the States concerned. It is the right of the judiciary to interpret the Constitution and to apply it and none of us can or should challenge that. But if the Constitution itself comes in our way, then surely it is time to change that Constitution to that extent. It is impossible to hang up urgent social changes because the Constitution comes in the way, according to the interpretation of courts. This has happened in Bihar also. We shall have to find a remedy, even though this might involve a change in the Constitution.[41]

25. Having returned today from Ahmedabad, I am naturally full of the proceedings of the All India Congress Committee. I confess that I do not feel quite happy at the atmosphere that prevailed there. Nevertheless, there was, I think, a full realization of the importance and urgency of the issues before us and, as a consequence, the main resolution [42] of the A.I.C.C. was passed. I am enclosing a copy of this resolution.[43] This, I need hardly say, is not merely a resolution to be passed but something to be acted upon immediately in spirit and in letter.

26. The Republic Day celebrations in various parts of the country are reported to have been a great success and there was a good deal of popular enthusiasm. In Delhi, the military parade as well as the historical pageant were most impressive. On this occasion these celebrations had more of a popular character about them than last year. This aspect has to be encouraged.

41. The Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951, passed in June 1951, removed the zamindari acts from the purview of the courts.

42. The Unity of Action resolution, passed on 30 January, *inter alia* appealed to all, including Congressmen, "to put aside their differences and co-operate for the larger causes which the Congress represents." The resolution drew attention to the urgent tasks of raising food production, promoting cottage and small-scale industries and combating such social evils as black-marketing and corruption.

43. Not printed.

27. I should like you as well as many others as possible to see the International Engineering Exhibition, which is being held in Delhi. This will probably remain open for another six weeks or more. It is not only a fine exhibition and profitable to those who see it, but it shows also the advances in Indian engineering and in the great public works, more especially river valley schemes, that we are undertaking. Unfortunately not many people realize what constructive work is being done in India today. We hear much about the failings of Government and very little of these great advances. The work done so far in engineering projects as well as in scientific development has been remarkable. I attended the Indian Science Congress at Bangalore on the 2nd January. I was unable to be present, much as I wanted to go there, at the centenary celebration of the Geological Survey of India.[44] The great scientific laboratories that we have built up fill me with enthusiasm whenever I see them. By laying the foundations of large-scale scientific work, we have done something which is of essential importance for the future of India. The results may not come immediately, but they are bound to come.

28. As you know, we are trying our utmost to cut down expenditure in the Central Government, sometimes, I regret to say, at the expense of many desirable schemes. There is no escape from this at present and I hope your Government will also economize to the best of its ability. It is as a part of this economy drive, as well as to bring about greater efficiency in our work, that there has been a reorganization of some Ministries in the Central Government.[45]

29. The next session of Parliament begins on February 5th. This will have important work to consider, apart from the Budget. I do not envy the Finance Minister in the preparation of his Budget this year. It is a very difficult task when our

44. Held at Calcutta on 14 January 1951.

45. The Ministries of Food and Agriculture were amalgamated on 17 January 1951.

resources are so limited and when we cannot do so much that we want to do. But even more important for us is to think hard as to what general line of policy we should adopt to meet the economic situation which faces us. Merely to economize, and that too in useful projects, cannot by itself lead to any kind of progress. It is at best a static position and it may be worse. Therefore, it has become necessary to go deeper into this question. We are giving earnest thought to it in the Planning Commission and I hope that in the course of the next two months or so, we shall be able to put forward certain proposals for your consideration. I hope you are also giving thought to these matters and I shall welcome an expression of your views on them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

39

New Delhi
7 February, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

I should like to draw your particular attention to certain reliable reports that we have received about the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha. It appears that the Hindu Mahasabha has decided upon a definite plan of creating communal trouble. They feel that there is no other way of achieving their objective, whatever that might be. They are not likely to go far by the normal democratic methods. So, rather foolishly, they think in terms of having communal riots and thus gaining two objectives. The first is to frighten and drive away Muslims and the second is to make Hindus anti-Government and anti-Congress, because Government is likely to take action against them in case of trouble.

Such riots usually take place by the story of some case of cow-slaughter. This enrages the Hindus in the neighbourhood who then attack and loot their Muslim neighbours. It is patent that, in existing circumstances, there is very little chance of any Muslims indulging in cow-slaughter in rural or other areas, when they know the strong feeling against it.

Recently, such allegations of cow-slaughter were made in Bihar and they were followed by riots and the killing and looting of Muslims.[1] The Bihar Government took strong action immediately.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. A sadhu who had protested against cow-slaughter at Kumardhubi in Dhanbad district was murdered on 30 January 1951. This led to rioting on the following day in which several Muslims were killed and some houses burnt.

At the last session of the Hindu Mahasabha at Poona, highly objectionable and very virulent speeches were made.[2] Those speeches were themselves an indication of the way the Hindu Mahasabha mind was working. Further information received by us tends to show that they intend creating much more mischief on the lines indicated above. I am therefore sending you this information, so that you might be careful about Hindu Mahasabha activities, in particular in areas where Muslims live in some numbers. Those activities should be carefully watched and action taken where necessary.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

2. N.B. Khare, presiding over the annual session of the All India Hindu Mahasabha on 24 December 1950, held Congress responsible for India's partition, and criticizing India's foreign policy, said that "India was nobody's darling." He, in particular, attacked India's policy towards Nepal and described the Nehru-Liaquat Pact as "a palliative." Khare also criticized Sheikh Abdullah's Government, demanded imposition of central rule in Jammu and Kashmir and said that his Party was not afraid of Pakistan.

40

New Delhi
18 February, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

There has been no marked change in the international situation since I wrote to you last. So far as Korea is concerned, the United Nations, at the instance of the United States, passed a resolution branding China as an aggressor.[1] This resolution, as originally drafted, also suggested that some sanctions should be applied against China. Under pressure of the United Kingdom and some other countries, a slight variation was made and this sanctions clause was dropped.[2] But a committee was appointed to consider this question. Although the resolution was toned down to some extent by this variation, in effect, it produced the result that we feared.[3] The door to any negotiations was practically shut in spite of the fact that some kind of a Good Offices Committee was proposed to be

1. On 1 February 1951.

2. It was agreed on 29 January 1951 (1) to postpone the application of sanctions till the results of the efforts of the Good Offices Committee for resolving the Korean crisis became known, and (2) to change the phrase in the U.S. resolution that the Beijing Government "has rejected" all calls for ceasefire to read as "has not accepted".

3. On 3 February, China rejected the U.N. resolution and declared that no ceasefire negotiations or peaceful settlement of the Korean crisis was possible. On the same day, Zhou En-lai accused the United States of being an aggressor in Korea and Taiwan and alleged that she had aggressive designs on Indo China and South East Asia.

appointed to carry on negotiations.[4] This rather dual approach, i.e., of branding China as an aggressor and thinking in terms of sanctions, and at the same time suggesting negotiations, was self-contradictory and could hardly be expected to produce any results. China considered it an insult and refused to have anything to do with the Good Offices Committee. Perhaps, the passing of the resolution produced a certain feeling of satisfaction in the United States. But, I am sure that the U.K., Canada and some other countries were rather unhappy and, indeed, the Canadian representative, although voting for the resolution, described it as "premature and unwise."

2. On behalf of India, Shri B.N. Rau voted against it and explained our position fully and frankly.[5] Subsequently, the President of the U.N. invited India to join the three-man Good Offices Committee. We were unable to accept this offer [6] because that Good Offices Committee was a child of this resolution and could only function in terms of it. After some delay, this Committee was appointed.[7] But it is obvious that it can do nothing effective as China refuses to deal with it.[8] We have some indications, however, that China would like to go ahead with negotiations, and it has been rather vaguely suggested that any proposal for such negotiations, outside the

4. The resolution, affirming faith in the U.N 's ability to bring about an end to war in Korea through negotiations, requested the President to name two persons to work on the committee.

5. B.N. Rau said the chances of success through negotiations were marred as the resolution proposing negotiations also condemned a Government. He thought that the Arab-Asian resolution would have brought about ceasefire within perhaps a week.

6. On 4 February, Nehru announced that India would not join the Good Offices Committee.

7. It was formally constituted on 12 February 1951 with the President N. Entezam of Iran, Sven Gratstrom of Sweden and Louis Padilla of Mexico as its members.

8. On 3 February 1951, Zhou En-lai refused to recognize the legal status of the Good Offices Committee and described it as "an attempt to deceive good-hearted but naive peace-loving people."

United Nations, might be acceptable. It is rather doubtful if any such step is likely to be taken in the near future.

3. Meanwhile, war goes on in Korea and that country is being utterly ruined. For some weeks, there was no major fighting and it was indeed rumoured that the Chinese forces had been partly withdrawn from Korea. The U.N. forces, which had previously been drifting southward, far beyond Seoul, found that there was no pressure upon them, and recovering gradually, advanced northwards. This removal of immediate danger led to a more optimistic view being taken of the military situation, and yet there was little reason for this. Lately, North Korean resistance, aided by the Chinese, has stiffened.

4. You must have seen the statement I made in Parliament about the Far Eastern situation,[9] as well as about Kashmir.[10] I dealt with the Kashmir position rather fully because there has been a great deal of misconception in regard to it. A spate of virulent propaganda, accompanied by threats of holy war, has been going on in Pakistan, and the British and American press has apparently got rather unnerved by this propaganda and threats. There has been much criticism of India in regard to Kashmir in the foreign press.[11] Those countries, which do not approve of our Far Eastern policy, have tried to draw invidious

9. Nehru said on 12 February that there had been general agreement at the Commonwealth Conference that Korea should be unified and by free election decide its future and elect its own government. There was discussion as to whether a ceasefire should precede or follow the negotiations. One of the points in dispute was the future of Taiwan. He stated that if the "unfortunate error" of keeping China out from the U.N. had not been committed, much of the trouble that followed could have been avoided.

10. He said, "irrespective of what Pakistan said or did, India stood by the pledge given to the people of Kashmir and subsequently to the United Nations to enable the former to decide their future."

11. For example, *The Times* (London) wrote on 8 February 1951: "No one knowing the intensity of the present feeling in Pakistan over Kashmir can fail to sympathize with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan's anxiety to get the dispute settled. Outside observers rarely seem to trust Nehru that he equally wanted the problem settled."

comparisons between that policy and our Kashmir policy. For my part, I am convinced that the policy we have pursued in regard to Korea and China has been fundamentally right. Indeed, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference very largely agreed with it, although some of the Commonwealth countries did not act in consonance with it at the United Nations subsequently.[12]

5. As regards Kashmir, the position, in spite of its complications, is a simple one. We have agreed to a plebiscite and we still stand by that agreement. We are prepared to have the plebiscite on the fairest possible terms and to give authority to the Plebiscite Commissioner to supervise this plebiscite fully. We are prepared to withdraw our troops to the utmost extent compatible with security. We have already withdrawn a good part of our forces from there, even though Pakistan has not done so. We could withdraw even more if Pakistan withdrew her forces. Apart from keeping her Army in Kashmir state territory, Pakistan continues to indulge in hysterical campaigns full of threats of war. It is clear that there can be no settlement or agreement so long as these threats are held out. It seems to me equally clear that no plebiscite is possible with this background of holy war.

6. It is said sometimes that the life of Pakistan depends upon the possession of Kashmir. It is not quite clear what this means, but sometimes it is explained that this refers to the fact that the headwaters of certain Punjab rivers are in Kashmir state territory. These rivers are the Indus, the Jhelum and the Chenab. This argument has no force whatever. The Indus flows through the far north of Kashmir state through mountainous territory and no one has ever thought of interfering with this flow. The Jhelum comes out of the Kashmir Valley through deep gorges and runs on to the Punjab. Probably nothing short of an atom bomb will affect its course. As for the Chenab, it is a physical possibility, though very

12. See *ante*, pp. 316-318 and 331.

difficult, to drain away part of these waters. Practically speaking, all these have no significance. In any event, it should be perfectly easy to have an agreement about these rivers with any assurances or guarantees that might be necessary. The fact of the matter is that the Kashmir problem is not considered by Pakistan as a political or economic problem. It would be easy enough to settle it on that basis. But it is definitely not easy for any settlement to be reached which is based on religious divisions or on threats.

7. For many days now, we have been waiting for the Kashmir matter to come up again before the Security Council. Rumours float about to the effect that the U.K. and the U.S.A. are busy evolving some kind of a resolution for the Security Council.[13] We have no idea yet of what this resolution is likely to be. That is rather curious, for one would have thought that the only chance of success of such a resolution was to have it framed in consultation with the parties concerned.

8. It appears probable that the U.S. Congress will agree to sending us one million tons of foodgrains. The President of the United States has recommended this, but I must confess that some of his suggestions in this connection are rather odd.[14] One of these is that there should be propaganda in India to the effect that America had given us these foodgrains. We shall be duly grateful if we get any assistance of this kind from the U.S., because our position in regard to food is a very difficult one. But it will be unfortunate if any attempt is made to attach

13. B.N. Rau informed Nehru on 6 February that Britain was uncommunicative on the Kashmir issue and it was learnt that she and the U.S.A. proposed to introduce in the Security Council a resolution for partial plebiscite, and Pakistan was perhaps aware of it.

14. In a special message to the Congress on 12 February 1951, Truman asked for authorization for two million tons of foodgrains. Of this, only one million tons should be made available immediately to meet urgent needs; appropriation of funds for the second instalment of one million tons should be deferred until the current food situation in India became clearer and arrangements for supply were also settled.

strings to such a gift. We have to wait, for the present, for the resolution of the U.S. Congress.

9. As you know, we have strained every nerve to get food from outside. We hope to get over the difficult period this year, though full relief cannot be given. The basic fact of the food situation, however, stares us in the face. We cannot be dependent in regard to it on foreign countries for long. It is essential that we make ourselves more or less self-sufficient. If we do not do so and crisis comes over the world, then we shall be left high and dry and might not be able to get food from abroad. I feel that there is far too much of a tendency among some States to look forward to food from outside or through the Centre and not think and work with the urgent desire of producing enough food for their own needs. Those States that have some surplus hold on to it. If unfortunately war comes, then our position will become difficult indeed. Therefore, it is of essential importance that we should try our utmost to rely on our resources and to increase them.

10. Very recently the King of Nepal returned to his capital [15] after nearly a hundred days' stay in Delhi. Recent developments in Nepal have demonstrated, I think, the essential soundness of the policy we adopted and the advice we gave.[16] The first and very difficult stage is now over. But, in some ways, an even more difficult stage remains. It would be absurd to imagine that all the basic conflicts and problems of Nepal have been solved. Far from it. But we have got over a big hurdle and pointed the way for a solution. The next month or two will show how far the Nepalese people are capable of working together for the solution of their many problems.

11. During the last two weeks, two more national laboratories have been started—one at Roorkee [17] and the

15. On 15 February 1951.

16. See *ante*, p. 328.

17. The Central Building Research Institute was inaugurated on 10 February 1951.

other in Lucknow.[18] This completes our programme for these laboratories. Some of them are working fully, some are likely to be ready soon, and in regard to one or two, building operations have begun. I think that the building and equipping of these laboratories in a very short time, and the work that they are doing, redounds greatly to the credit of India. It is an achievement of which we might well be proud. These laboratories are first-rate both in appearance and the work done.

12. We sent Shri N.R. Pillai,[19] Cabinet Secretary, to Karachi a few days ago[20] to start talks about a trade settlement between India and Pakistan. It is obvious that, normally speaking, there should be full trade between these two countries. It is harmful to both to put barriers to it. Yet, because of political and other considerations, these barriers have continued. We should like to lower them and to have openings in them, even though we cannot wholly remove them at present. In the course of a day or two, a conference is going to be held in Karachi[21] to explore this subject of trade further.

13. I need not remind you of the urgent necessity for every economy. For the central budget, we have sat day after day trying to reduce our expenditure not only on capital projects, but also on recurring expenditure. We have demobilized a number of our Army men and we propose to continue this process. We are anxious to put India on a firm basis, so that we can advance later on. I hope your Government is following the same policy.

14. In our budgets, we frequently find very large estimates for buildings. Most of the money we have got goes into brick, water

18. Nehru inaugurated the Central Drug Research Institute on 17 February 1951.

19. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 174.

20. On 9 February 1951.

21. The conference at the level of officials was held from 19 to 25 February 1951.

and cement. I think that we should revise this policy and, except for very special buildings, we should try to carry on with relatively cheaper structures. Our Cabinet has strongly recommended this. It does not matter if a cheaper structure cannot survive more than a few years. We can use it till then and save heavy capital expenditure now.

15. You have, no doubt, learnt that Shri Mahavir Tyagi,[22] M.P., has been appointed a Minister of State in the Finance Ministry.[23] I am sure that we shall profit by this appointment.

16. Three days ago, I made a statement in Parliament in which I referred to certain periodicals in India. While appreciating the role of newspapers generally, I pointed out that some weekly periodicals specially had passed all limits of decency and were carrying on persistently a propaganda full of falsehood and malice. Normally one does not take notice of this kind of thing, as even a denial gives publicity to an allegation. But to remain silent may also have bad consequences. In any event, this matter requires full consideration. I have appealed to newspaper editors to take it in hand.[24] If they fail, then something else will have to be thought of.

17. I returned to Delhi from Lucknow at quarter past eleven this morning. About half an hour after that I was informed of the sudden death [25] of my colleague, Shri Khurshed Lal,[26] Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Communication. He felt

22. (1899-1980). Congressman from U.P.; suffered imprisonment during freedom struggle several times; member, Constituent Assembly, 1946-49, of Lok Sabha, 1952-67 and of Rajya Sabha, 1970-74; Union Minister of Revenue and Expenditure, 1951-53, of Defence Organization, 1953-57, and of Rehabilitation, 1964-66; Chairman, Fifth Finance Commission, 1968-69.

23. On 16 February 1951.

24. Nehru said: "What I am specially concerned about is the degradation of a section of our press, and the journalists should consider this matter with all seriousness and prevent this degradation which cannot but affect the public life of our country."

25. On 18 February 1951.

26. For b. fn. see Vol. 1, p. 217.

unwell last evening and spent a very bad night. This morning he was removed to Willingdon Nursing Home where he died soon after as a result of a heart attack. He had previously suffered from thrombosis, but for a considerable time past he had had no particular trouble to our knowledge. His death has been a very severe blow to us in many ways. He had amply justified his appointment by his work and was one of the most popular Members of Parliament. Both by his ability, tact and good humour, he had shown his capacity to undertake wider responsibilities. After much thought we had decided to appoint him as our High Commissioner in Pakistan, a post which is of first importance. For some of us, and I am of that number, he was a personal friend with whom we had been associated in public work for nearly 30 years. It is, thus, a matter of deep grief to me to report this to you.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

41

New Delhi
19 February, 1951

My dear Chief Minister.*

In a recent letter [1] .I drew your attention to the deliberate attempts being made by the Hindu Mahasabha to create communal trouble. Information has reached us that the coming *Holi* festival may be specially utilized for this purpose. You will remember that it was during this *Holi* festival last year that trouble took place in many parts of Uttar Pradesh and in some other States also. I would, therefore, request you to take every possible precaution on this occasion.

Usually police officials and others take part in the *Holi* festivities or play games and matches. As they are otherwise occupied, the hooligan elements have a chance of misbehaving. This might be borne in mind.

Apart from police arrangements, it would be desirable if Congress and other workers were encouraged to keep wide awake on this occasion and try to control the public. Civil authorities should be particularly kept up to the mark and informed that it is their special responsibility that no trouble occurs in the areas under their control. If trouble does take place, it will not redound to their credit and will be a black mark against them.

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.
1. See *ante*, item 39.

2. Even so, the *Holi* celebrations on 23 March were marred by some clashes in Bareilly where seven persons were killed and 25 injured and in Kanpur, Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Jabalpur.

42

New Delhi
2 March, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The outstanding facts since I wrote to you last are the presentation of the central budgets, both railway [1] and general.[2] Also the conclusion of the Indo-Pakistan Trade Agreement.[3]

2. The two budgets have naturally drawn a good deal of attention all over the country and are being fully discussed. I do not wish to write much about them, but I would like to point out that in drawing up both these budget estimates and in considering the policy underlying them, we have thought a little more of the future than of the present. It was not very difficult perhaps to lay greater stress on the present and thus to get the approval of large numbers of people, who normally think only of the present. But if we make ourselves responsible for the governance of India, we have always to think of tomorrow and the day after. In fact, the whole idea of planning means that we think of the future. Therefore, to some extent, we have sacrificed present benefits, so that our position might be stronger later on. We have not hesitated to raise, by a fraction, railway fares or to raise fresh taxes. This may not be the way of the normal politician, more especially on the eve of general elections. But I am convinced that we would have shirked our duty if we had tried (as we could easily have done)

1. On 22 February 1951.

2. On 28 February 1951.

3. The Agreement, to last sixteen months, was signed at Karachi on 25 February 1951. While India agreed to recognize the Pakistani rupee at par value and supply textiles, coal and cement, Pakistan agreed to supply raw jute, cotton, rice and wheat. Both countries also agreed to place a number of items under the Open General Licence.

by juggling of figures to present a more rosy picture. It is time that we faced reality and prepared to meet its challenge. Only thus can we prove the mettle we are made of.

3. Our railway budget is a record of continuous and, if I may say so, rather remarkable progress. I remember, and you would remember, the condition of our railways three or four years ago. The War deprived us of locomotives, wagons and rails and we were badly in need of them. The partition made matters worse in many ways. Vast quantities of goods, which could not be transported, lay piled up in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere. Our coal could not reach its destination without long delay. The trains were terribly crowded and hardly ever ran to time. Gradually we have met the ravages of the war years and the partition and built up anew our railway system. It is very far from perfect and the amenities we provide for our passengers are the barest minimum. Yet even there a marked improvement is visible. Transport now is swift and sure. Our railways have been given heavy tasks in regard to transport in recent years and they have carried them out with speed and efficiency. I think that, among our achievements of these years, the improvement in our railway position is one that should occupy a very prominent place and our Railway Minister [4] deserves full credit for this.

4. We have in this case, as often in others, two demands which are mutually contradictory. There is the demand, which I think is justified, for greater amenities;[5] and there is the demand for no rise in fares or even reduction of them.[6] It is not possible to have it both ways and so we have decided that it is far better to improve the railways in every way, give further amenities and strengthen their financial position for the future.

4. N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 44.

5. During the debate on the railway budget, some members pleaded for better conditions of travel for passengers.

6. H.N. Kunzru, criticizing the increase on 28 February, suggested that third class fares be increased only by 1/2 a pie rather than 1 pie per mile as suggested in the budget.

The cost for this has to be met and it can only be met by raising the fares. That rise has been very little and though undoubtedly it will be an inconvenience to many, it is no marked burden. The very act of doing so is an act of some courage for our Railway Minister.

5. It is undoubtedly true that with an effort we can prevent wastage, improve the administration and stop or lessen such corruption as might exist. But all this, even if done satisfactorily, does not give us an answer to the principal problem of development, of adding to the wealth of the country, or ultimately dealing with the curse of poverty. Progress and development have to be paid for. There is no other way. The methods of paying for it may differ somewhat, but ultimately they involve some privation, some tightening of the belt, for all our people. There is no escape from this and the sooner all of us realize it, the better. The Soviet Union made considerable progress, but she paid for it terribly. Ultimately progress will depend upon our savings, or possibly on borrowings, which have to be paid back. It will depend, of course, on the way we utilize such savings and the general policy that we pursue.

6. It is this general policy which has been considered by the Planning Commission for these many months. It was no good their putting forward some kind of an idealistic programme which had little basis in reality. Therefore, they had to get to grips with facts and reality and to consult not only our Ministries at the Centre but also the State Governments. They did not have a clean slate to write upon. We have to build on the foundations we have, though possibly in doing so we may remove some obstruction or some ancient relic. The Planning Commission has wrestled with these basic problems and I hope that within a brief period it will issue its first report containing its recommendations.[7] Because of our limited resources, it is essential that we apply them to the best advantage. That raises

7. The report was published on 9 July 1951.

the question of priorities. Sometimes it is said that there is no need for planning as our resources are limited. That reasoning depends upon false premises. Planning is thought by some of these people to consist of some major schemes and if we cannot pay for them, let us not have any planning. As a matter of fact, though planning is always desirable, it is just when resources are limited that planning becomes absolutely essential, so that those limited resources might not be diverted into wrong channels or suffer from a wrong policy. Planning must be carefully thought out with some kind of the picture of the future kept in view. Planning must have the largest measure of co-coperation from the public, if it is to succeed in the degree that we want it to succeed. It is from this viewpoint that the Planning Commission has been working and I hope that your Governments will continue to give it all the co-operation that is needed.

7. To revert to the budgets. I think that everyone will agree that these budgets are clean, straightforward and honest documents which placed the economic position of the country frankly before the people and have devised methods so as to better it. There is nothing very remarkable about them, no purple patches, or far-reaching changes. But there is an indication in them of the way we are looking and the policy we wish to pursue. On the whole, they tell us of a basically sound position of our economy.[8] They tell us also that hard work and a measure of privation will be necessary for all of us if we wish to go ahead in this hard and competitive world of ours.

8. In drawing up our budget and in laying down our general policy, we have to keep in view the world situation and the dangers inherent in it. At any moment we may have to face

8. In his budget speech, C.D. Deshmukh stated that industrial production especially in cement, steel and coal had increased during 1950-51, the capital markets showed signs of revival for the first time since the recession in 1946 and sterling balances and the balance of payments position was favourable. N. Gopalawami Ayyangar told Parliament on 22 February that gross receipts of railways showed an improvement over the past years.

some of these dangers and it is necessary, therefore, to have a firm economic foundation for this purpose. Most major countries are today spending vast sums of money in huge rearmament programmes. We are rather unique in this respect. When armies are growing up in Europe and America and more and more we hear the tramp of armed men elsewhere, in India we have had the courage to reduce our army.[9] We have done so after the most careful thought, for the primary duty of a Government is to take no risks about the country's security. We do not think we have taken any undue risk. We have fine defence services and we are proud of them. But strength depends more on quality than on principle. Strength depends not merely on the defence services but also on the productive capacity and the economic foundation of a country. It depends finally on morale and that unquenchable spirit which never surrenders to evil or accepts defeat. We have to keep all these facts in view. The defence forces cannot carry on unless they are fed continuously by the nation's productive apparatus. Therefore, while making every endeavour to keep up our army, navy and air force at a high level of efficiency, we have also given thought to those basic foundations which make not only the defence services but the nation generally function in a satisfactory manner. We cannot do all that we want to do because of our limited resources, but we can apply those resources to the best advantage.

9. You will notice that in spite of our financial difficulties, we have gone ahead with our plans for our major schemes and productive enterprises.[10] We attach the greatest value to these,

9. Expenditure on the army during the year was reduced by Rs. 12.88 crores, and the Finance Minister hoped for "further reductions."

10. Increased allocations were made for further development of the railways and of posts and telegraphs, the setting up of a fertilizer factory at Sindri and a machine-tool factory at Bangalore, and for ship-building, and the manufacture of dry cables. Allocations were also made for promoting the welfare of scheduled castes and tribes and for providing food subsidies. States were given loans for work on river valley projects, industrial housing and 'Grow-More-Food' schemes.

for they represent, more than anything else, the promise of the future. We have also provided, more than before, for the rehabilitation of displaced persons.[11] In this connection, I should like to say that while a great deal remains to be done and many refugees are still homeless and unhappy, a very great number of these displaced persons have been provided for.[12] If this picture is looked at as a whole and in perspective, the work of rehabilitation that we have done is remarkable and can well compare with any like work in any other part of the world.

10. Recently we have broken the long-standing deadlock between India and Pakistan in regard to trade. Here again we judged the question as dispassionately as possible without allowing pure sentiment to govern our actions. We thought naturally in terms of India's good. People accused us of a surrender to Pakistan;[13] others say that if we had to recognize the par value of the Pakistan rupee, why did we not do so a year ago or more?[14] I think these questions and complaints arise from a misconception of the situation. We were perfectly justified in not recognizing the Pakistani rupee for a variety of reasons. Indeed those reasons would inevitably have led, as they almost led, to a devaluation of that rupee. But the Korean war and the tremendous rearmament programmes of various countries suddenly made a great difference. Countries which supplied certain forms of primary produce[15] could now sell

11. The total sum provided in 1951-52 was Rs. 35 crores compared to Rs. 20 crores in 1950-51.

12. By this time, 626,000 families from West Pakistan, and 185,000 families from East Pakistan had been allotted land. They also received as loan a sum of Rs. 76,000,000.

13. In its editorial of 28 February 1951, *Amrit Bazar Patrika* described the Agreement as "senseless surrender" and hoped that "this surrender will not be the beginning of further surrender under 'altered circumstances' of which the Government of India may be suddenly conscious one fine morning."

14. Asoka Mehta, General Secretary of the Socialist Party, said on 26 February that "after many months of barren controversy and economic loss we have been compelled to arrive at an agreement more or less on the terms that were available earlier."

15. The primary products included jute goods, raw cotton, cotton waste, raw wool, raw oils, seeds, gums, resins, lac, hides and skins, tin, etc.

their goods for very high prices. It became a sellers' market for them with plenty of bidders for their commodities. Because of this we made some profit also. Because of this the Pakistan rupee, which had grown very weak, became strong again. World conditions now supported the exchange value of that rupee. For us to continue not to recognize it would have been completely unrealistic. Therefore, we decided to take this step. It is true that many people will consider it as some kind of a surrender simply because we have opposed it previously. But I am quite certain that, in existing circumstances, it was the right step. The matter was considered very fully by our Economic Committee of the Cabinet and the Cabinet itself before we came to this important decision.

11. We have had many conflicts with Pakistan during the past three and a half years. It has always been our desire to put an end to them because we were convinced that this would benefit our country, as well as, of course, Pakistan. We did not look upon this question from the point of view of just injuring Pakistan, even though there might be a consequent injury to our own interests also. If a trade agreement benefits us and at the same time benefits Pakistan, we have nothing to complain of. The test is what good it does to us. It is an additional gain that it removes a barrier between India and Pakistan. I wish that the other barriers still remaining might also go. But, as you know, it is not our fault that those other barriers continue. So far as the evacuee property and canal waters questions are concerned, we made every effort to come to terms and even offered an independent joint tribunal which Pakistan did not accept.[16]

12. There remains Kashmir. As I write this, this major question is being argued before the Security Council. The U.K. and the U.S.A. representatives at the Security Council have

16. See *ante*, p. 230.

sponsored a joint resolution which you must have seen.[17] This resolution is extraordinary in many ways. To the unwary it might perhaps appear a fair approach to a solution, but it is far the worst approach that has thus far been made and therefore it is bound to fail. It is extraordinary because it puts aside and ignores agreements already arrived at between India and Pakistan and the United Nations Commission. It is extraordinary because it ignores completely what we have repeatedly said and it lays down a procedure which, its sponsors must have known, will be rejected by us utterly. What the motives of the U.K. and the U.S.A. might have been in sponsoring this resolution, I cannot say. But the whole approach is anti-India and, if I may say so, against logic and the facts of the situation. So far as we are concerned, the only course open to us is to reject it completely and to have no truck with it. We have advised our representative, Shri B.N. Rau, to do so.[18] We have told him not to move any amendments and not to try to improve the resolution here and there. The whole thing is bad and we wish to have nothing to do with it. We realize that the Security Council, constituted as it is today, is very likely to follow the lead of the U.S.A. and the U.K. It is with full knowledge of this that we have come to our decision and we are prepared for any consequences that might flow from that decision.

13. I have drawn your attention previously to the astonishing campaign for *jehad* and holy war which has been going on for many months in Pakistan. It passes my comprehension how any

17. The resolutions introduced on 21 February, proposed that to solve the Kashmir dispute by "free and impartial plebiscite," the Security Council should appoint its representative to effect: (1) demilitarization of the state on the basis of Dixon's recommendations; (2) conduct a plebiscite with the help of either local or U.N. forces; and (3) carry out boundary readjustments between India and Pakistan based on economic and geographical considerations. In case of failure, the resolution suggested arbitration by a person appointed by the International Court of Justice, and took strong exception to proposed elections to the Constituent Assembly in the state.

18. On 1 March 1951, the Security Council was informed of India's rejection of the resolution.

agreement can be reached when one of the major parties is always talking of war.[19] We do not want war and we shall not take any step towards war, but also we will not submit to threats of war. What kind of plebiscite can take place with this threat continually facing us?

14. An important piece of legislation, which has recently been passed by Parliament, relates to preventive detention.[20] You know how I dislike such measures, and yet there was no course open to us but to have some legislation on this subject. The present act is much milder than its predecessor[21] and I hope that it will be applied with due care and only when there is absolute necessity for it. People talk of civil liberties being endangered by it.[22] That is partly true. But it is also true that there are groups in the country openly waging war and a war which consists largely of individual murder and acts of terrorism. I confess I have little sympathy for these brutalities and inhumanities, whatever cover they may have.

15. Two private bills gave rise to some discussion in Parliament. One dealt with what is known as *vanaspati* or hydrogenated

19. For example, on 26 February, Nurul Amin, Premier of East Bengal, declared that the "people and the Government of Pakistan will not budge an inch from their commitment of liberating 40 lakhs of Muslims of the Jammu and Kashmir State. Pakistan may resort to any method forced on her by unavoidable circumstances."

20. The Preventive Detention Bill, passed by Parliament on 19 February, was enacted on 21 February 1951. The Act was a renewal of the Preventive Detention Act (1950) which had lapsed.

21. The 1951 Act made it obligatory for the Government to refer all cases of detention to the advisory board whose advice was made binding on the Government. It also introduced a system of parole for detenus.

22. As stated by the Home Minister on 9 February in Parliament, the President of the Civil Liberties Committee of West Bengal and 30 "eminent lawyers" of the Calcutta High Court had in a note of protest described the Act as "not only dangerous" but a "stigma on free India." In the debate on 10 February, K.T. Shah discounted the fears "of threat to the State" in case "the freedom to the fullest extent as the Constitution permits" was given.

vegetable oil[23] and the other with the preservation of cattle.[24] Both these matters have importance and should be considered dispassionately. Unfortunately a good deal of sentiment and passion come into the picture.[25] There is no one in India who does not desire to preserve milch cattle and we have to find out the best way of doing so. But the fact to be remembered is that India which respects animal life so much perhaps treats its animals worse than almost any country. It is not by sentiment and appeals to religious passion that we can solve this or any other problem. As it is, our food supply is greatly affected by the vast number of either useless animals who have to be fed or wild animals which destroy. Recently, there has been a dangerous locust menace in the Punjab.[26] It appears that this was partly due at least to a misplaced religious sentiment in a certain part of India, which came in the way of the destruction of locust eggs. Fortunately there is no such scruple in the Punjab. The whole population of the affected districts has been organized to destroy this pest which can do incalculable harm.

16. The food situation continues to be very difficult, though there is some hope. There has been some restoration of the cut in the rations of heavy manual workers.[27] We hope that within

23. The Bill on "prohibition of manufacture and import of hydrogenated vegetable oils" was moved in April 1950. It had elicited 14,485 petitions in its favour by 10 February 1951. On 26 February, K.M. Munshi informed Parliament that the Government proposed to introduce a Bill after it received the recommendation of the committee which was looking into the issue. Later, as per the committee's findings, the Government decided against imposing a ban on the import, manufacture and distribution of *vanaspati*.

24. The Bill was discussed in Parliament on 26 February 1951.

25. The discussions on 26 February on preservation of cattle was dominated by some members' insistence on a ban on cow slaughter chiefly on religious grounds.

26. The districts of Hoshiarpur, Kangra, Jalandhar, Ambala, Hissar and Amritsar were worst affected by the swarms of locusts, which had to be destroyed before further multiplication.

27. The reduction had specially affected the daily supply of free rice to colliery labour and the plantation workers. This was restored from 19 February as per the directive of the Ministry of Food.

a month or so it might be possible to restore the cut in regard to other people. Food continues to come to the country from the ends of the earth. But this is just sufficient to keep us going. Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress is considering the supply of two million tons of foodgrains to India.[28]

17. As regards sugar and *gur*, the Government of India as you know, have fixed ceiling prices of *gur* in various States and a ceiling price of *khandsari* in the producing areas of Uttar Pradesh.[29] They have also authorized that prices of *khandsari* in other areas may be fixed after allowing for freight, merchandizing and incidental charges such as are approved for sugar. From market reports received from various States, it appears that the prices of *gur* and *khandsari* in most of the areas are still above the ceilings, more especially *khandsari* prices in the U.P. are still very high. The prices of *rab*, which should be lower than those of *gur*, are higher than *gur* in parts of the U.P. It is necessary that State Governments should take stringent measures to enforce the prices fixed in order to make *gur* and *khandsari* available to the consumer at reasonable rates and to prevent undue production of *gur* and *khandsari*. It has been suggested[30] that stocks be frozen to such an extent as may be necessary and then such stocks should be resold at controlled prices. I would, therefore, request you to take necessary action in this matter.

18. In a few days' time we are going to have the First Asian Games in Delhi.[31] About 600 athletes have come from different countries of Asia. This is a significant event not only for Delhi

28. On 12 February, Truman asked the Congress to authorize the supply of two million tons of foodgrains to India on grant basis with India paying the freight charges. The Bill was introduced in the Congress on 15 February 1951 and was passed on 6 and 11 June by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate respectively.

29. See *ante*, p. 285.

30. Parliament was informed on 28 February of this.

31. From 4 to 11 March 1951. Teams from eleven Asian countries participated.

but for India and I hope it will lead to greater interest in athletics and games and thus to an improvement in our physical standards.

19. I am going very soon to Bombay to inaugurate a great milk scheme which the Bombay State has started there.[32] I am very much attracted to this scheme both because it is good and because it is the right way to deal with such problems. We talk of the preservation of milch and useful cattle and pass resolutions or even laws, usually asking people not to do this or not to do that. We do not as often do something ourselves about it and so the Bombay Government is to be congratulated on this fine scheme.

20. We have to remember always that India is a country with a variety of cultures, habits, customs, and ways of living. Each province and each group thinks of India as an extension of itself, rather forgetting the others. They press for laws which they think are right but which may be very hard for many others or might even go against their age-long customs. Some people want to introduce a uniformity in dress or in footwear or in food. Do they realize the difference in climate between the south and the west and the east and the north of India? Do they realize how people live in Ladakh and Kashmir and the other mountain regions of India? Do they remember that there are large numbers of tribal folk very different from them and with their own way of living, which is in many respects perhaps better than ours? Yet we try to impose our own ideas upon these people. It is very necessary, I think, for all of us to remember that this wonderful country of ours has infinite variety and there is absolutely no reason why we should try to regiment it after a single pattern. Indeed that is ultimately impossible because climate and geography, as well a long cultural traditions, come in the way.

32. The Aarey Milk Scheme, a project of the Bombay Government, was inaugurated by Nehru on 4 March 1951.

21. I have referred to the Planning Commission previously in this letter. I wanted to write to you more about this and of the way our minds are functioning and the objectives that are gradually taking shape. But this letter has grown and I do not wish to add to it much more. I would like, however, to mention one matter in this connection. Whatever policy we might adopt and whatever objectives we aim at, it is obvious that we can only attain success if we have the proper administrative apparatus for it. We must have a clean, impartial and efficient administration in every sector of public activity. This is always necessary, but it is even more so when we think of a progressively socialized economy. We have given much thought to this, as you must have done. The Planning Commission is paying particular attention to this matter and has asked Shri A.D. Gorwala,[33] with the help of others, to consider this question of our improving our administrative apparatus and to make recommendations.[34] In this connection, he may approach you or consult you. I hope you will give him every help.

22. I have not referred in this letter to international happenings. Nothing of great significance has happened during this past fortnight, though of course there is much that I would like to write to you about, if this letter had not already grown too long.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

33. (b. 1900). Entered I.C.S., 1924, served in Sind, Bombay and at Delhi, resigned in 1947; later prepared reports for Government on administration, management of state enterprises, export promotion, stock exchange reform; founder-editor of the weekly *Opinion*.

34. The report was published on 28 July 1950.

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New Delhi
21 March, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I have been very remiss in writing to you and there has been delay in sending this fortnightly letter. You will forgive me for this. But I am sure that you will give me also a measure of understanding. Somehow the burden of work increases and it becomes difficult to keep pace with it. This is especially so when Parliament is sitting. In addition, a host of visitors from foreign countries descend upon Delhi, and it is not always possible to avoid seeing them. Not all are interesting, but some of them are men and women of note whom I would myself like to meet. Among our visitors recently, there was Mr. David Lilienthal[1] who used to be the Chairman of Tennessee Valley Authority. To meet him[2] and talk to him was not only a pleasure, but it helped to widen one's horizon.

2. During the past fortnight or more, Delhi became full of athletic young men and young women from various countries of Asia. We were having the first Asian Games here in the new and rather fine National Stadium that has just been erected here. These Asian Games did not produce any records, so far as I am aware. But I think they had a peculiar significance of their own and it was a pleasure to see these fine athletes, from different Asian countries, meeting together in friendly contest. There were altogether about 600 of them here, the largest contingent, apart from India's, coming from Japan. The games

1. (1899-1981). American administrator and lawyer; Chairman, Tennessee Valley Authority, 1941-46, and of the Atomic Energy Commission, 1946-50.

2. Lilienthal came to Delhi on 15 February on a month's visit at the invitation of the Government of India to study the economic potential of river valley schemes.

were interesting, but what was even more pleasing was the way these groups mixed with one another and lived together in the stadium village in friendly comradeship. I am sure that these games have served a useful purpose in adding to the friendly understandings between different peoples of Asia.

3. A visitor, who is always welcome to India, was the Countess Mountbatten of Burma.[3] She came on a private visit after a very strenuous tour of West and East Africa lasting six weeks. She spent a few busy days in Delhi and then went on to Burma for St. John Ambulance inspection work. She will be coming back to Delhi before she returns to England. Lady Mountbatten has attached herself to India in mind and spirit so much that wherever she goes, she functions as a friend of India. Because of this, Indians welcome her in foreign countries with a warmth that is remarkable. During her tour in West Africa, probably her warmest welcomes came from the Indian residents there.

4. Partly because of her visit to Africa and partly for many other reasons, the question of Indians in Africa has been very much before us. There is, of course, the never-ending trouble in South Africa which seems to go on[4] in spite of the decisions of the United Nations.[5] The Union Government of South Africa has again treated the latest U.N. decision with some disdain.[6]

3. For b.fn. see Vol.1, p.144.

4. The Group Areas Act which became law on 7 June 1950 came into operation in the Cape, Natal, and Transvaal on 30 March 1951. On 8 March 1951, the Government introduced the Representation of Voters' Bill for the removal of the names of the coloured voters from the voters' roll and for their separate representation in Parliament.

5. See *ante*, p. 284.

6. On 7 March 1951, South Africa informed the United Nations that it was unable to accept the General Assembly resolution as it constituted "intervention....in the Union's domestic jurisdiction", but would be ready to resume the round table conference on the basis of the formula agreed upon in February 1950 according to which (1) a round table conference should be convened to explore ways of settling the Indian question in South Africa, and (2) such a conference would involve "no departure from, or prejudice to, the standpoint of the respective Governments in regard to the question of domestic jurisdiction."

We have made it clear[7] that we can only meet and discuss on the basis of that decision. I fear that there can be no proper solution of the South African Indian problem in the near future. It is patent that we cannot surrender there and thus betray the rights not only of Indians in South Africa but the principle for which we have always stood and which applies to many other parts of the world also. At the same time, the Union Government continues to be obstinate and, perhaps, it cannot be any other than obstinate on this issue because its very policy is based on racialism. So, in South Africa there is this conflict on one of the vital issues of the world and it can only be finally resolved on a world scale. War scares and preparations the world over might cloud this issue for the moment and divert people's attention from it. And yet, nevertheless, it remains one of the basic issues of our time. Perhaps it is a part of the larger problem that troubles the world today.

5. In East Africa, and to a lesser extent in West Africa, there is the problem of Indians and Africans. Do they fit in with each other; do they pull together and co-operate? We have always laid stress, as you know, that we want no special rights for Indians in Africa or elsewhere, at the cost of the rights of the people of the country concerned. We do not wish our people to exploit the people of Africa in any way. At the same time, we cannot tolerate anywhere in the wide world any treatment of our nationals which is against their self-respect and our dignity. We want no favours, but we are not prepared to accept any unfair discrimination either. The question of Indians in the African continent as a whole raises issues of great importance from the point of view of the future, for Africa is rapidly changing and is perhaps the problem continent of the future. If Indians fit in there in a friendly way with the Africans, then we can be of service to Africa and her people and be welcome there; not otherwise. I am happy to tell you that during the last two or three years there has been a remarkable improvement in the relations between Indians and Africans in East Africa. This

7. On 27 March 1951.

is largely due to the good work done by Shri Apa Pant, our Commissioner there. In West Africa recently, elections were held in some parts.[8] This was a new step[9] and a leader[10] of the Africans there, who was till recently in prison for sedition and the like[11] won the elections for his Party. The British Government showed wisdom in adapting themselves to the changing circumstances.[12]

6. As a result of all this, a new relationship, based on friendly understanding, is being built up between Africa and India. Many Africans look towards India for help in various ways, more especially for educational opportunities and technical training.

7. In the Far East, in Korea, war continues, though the pace is rather slow. But whether the pace be slow or fast, the people of Korea suffer beyond measure and their country is devastated. There has been no major fighting for several months there. Gradually, the North Korean and Chinese forces have retired and the U.N. forces have advanced. I do not think this has much military significance and the position, for the present, might well be described as a stalemate. It is quite

8. Elections were held in the Gold Coast (Ghana) from 5 to 10 February 1951 under the new Gold Coast Constitution announced by the British Colonial Office on 30 December 1950.

9. The new Constitution provided for an elected legislature and an executive headed by the Governor.

10. Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972). Leader of the freedom movement in Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast); formed Convention of People's Party, 1949; leader of Government Business in the Assembly, 1951; Prime Minister, 1952-57; President from 1957 till his deposition in 1966.

11. Widespread labour strikes followed by riots in Accra led to Nkrumah's arrest early in February 1950 on charges of inciting labour troubles and seditious activities. He was however released on 12 February 1951 on the eve of the inauguration of the new Constitution.

12. On 19 February 1951, the British Government welcomed the establishment of a democratic system and expressed the hope that with it a "new chapter in the history of the Gold Coast" would begin and "eventually they would join the Commonwealth as partners."

possible that the North Korean and Chinese forces might be preparing for a major counter-attack. It is clear that there can be no solution of the Korean problem without the full concurrence of China.

8. There has been some talk of renewed negotiations or approaches towards a peaceful settlement.[13] This talk, thus far, has little basis in fact. It is said on the part of the U.N. that they want to negotiate "through strength". Presumably the same idea has struck the Chinese also, who are certainly not too weak to give up what they have stood for. So, because of this search for a position of strength, little progress is made towards a negotiated settlement, and there is always danger of a bigger flare-up. All that can be said is that perhaps passions have cooled a little and an opportunity may come in the course of the next few weeks for some hopeful step to be taken. The crux of the question is still Formosa, not Korea. Neither party appears to be prepared to yield on Formosa.

9. In Europe, there have been preparatory meetings of representatives of the Powers.[14] These meetings have yielded little result thus far and not even the agenda has been agreed to. The main difficulty continues to be the rearmament of Germany and the representatives of the Powers spar for position. Meanwhile, rearmament goes on at an ever-increasing pace and more especially in the U.S.A. With the progress of this, other factors pushing the nations towards war come into evidence. Whether all these and other factors driving the world towards war will prevail ultimately or wisdom and restraint and the desire for peace of people throughout the world will triumph, no man can say.

13. On 17 March, India had hoped that the U.N. Good Offices Committee would make a fresh approach to China to arrive at a peaceful settlement. Trygve Lie, the U.N. Secretary-General, also formulated proposals for reaching a ceasefire in Korea.

14. The officials of Great Britain, the United States, France and the Soviet Union met in Paris from 5 March to 21 June to discuss the agenda for the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

10. In Iran recently, there has been the assassination of the Prime Minister [15] and later, another Minister.[16] Behind these bloody deeds, there lies apparently the story of oil, ever an unsavoury business. Iran is in a troubled and unstable state and Great Powers look upon her great oil resources with greed.[17] A Party in Iran,[18] and indeed the Majlis [19] also, have declared for nationalization of oil.

11. Nearer to us, in Pakistan, there have also been rather sensational developments resulting in the sudden arrest of Major General Akbar Khan,[20] Chief of Staff of the Army as well as many others [21] for, according to the Pakistan Government, deep conspiracy against the State.[22] Many rumours float about, but it is difficult to find out the real facts. It has been clearly stated by the Pakistan authorities that India had nothing to do with this business.[23] It was also stated that communism and the Soviets had nothing to do with it, but recently, hints are thrown

15. General Ali Razmara (1902-1951). Prime Minister from June 1950 till his assassination on 7 March 1951 by a member of the Fadayian Islam, (devotees of Islam) organization.

16. Abdul Hamid Zangoneh (1905-1951). Minister of Education, 1950-51; shot on 19 March by a member of the Fadayian Islam, and died on 25 March 1951.

17. Ali Razmara had in 1949 opposed the nationalization of oil in Iran. The British Government, which held a majority of shares in the oil company, had warned Iran that nationalization was illegal and they would be compelled to take "all possible measures" to protect their interests.

18. Fadayian Islam.

19. The Majlis (Parliament) had approved nationalization on 15 March 1951.

20. Had led the tribal invasion of Kashmir and Kalat in 1947 under the assumed name of General Tariq.

21. Brigadier M.A. Latif, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mrs. Akbar Khan were among others arrested.

22. Announced by Liaquat Ali Khan in Pakistan Parliament on 9 March 1951.

23. This was clarified in a statement by the Defence Secretary of Pakistan on 11 March 1951.

out that perhaps there was the hidden hand of Russia.[24] There appears to be nothing in these vague charges, but no doubt an attempt will be made to profit by it. Another attempt is being made to connect this somehow with Kashmir. It is hinted that the people, who were members of this conspiracy, were bent on removing the present leaders of Pakistan and then launching on a war against Kashmir. Thus it is sought to impress the world with the urgent need for a solution of the Kashmir issue, because otherwise the people of Pakistan will get out of hand. I do not think there is anything in these conjectures and allegations. It does appear, however, that below the surface, all is not well with Pakistan.

12. As for Kashmir, I have recently made our position perfectly clear at a press conference.[25] I have nothing to add to that. We are ourselves eager and anxious to settle this problem. But there is going to be no settlement on the basis of a surrender to what we consider a false claim and on a basis which would be, according to us, a denial of our pledges and a betrayal of the people of Kashmir. We are perfectly prepared for any kind of plebiscite, provided the conditions are fair and just and as had been previously largely agreed to. The U.S.A. and the U.K. resolution on Kashmir in the Security Council ignored much that had been done before and, indeed, went contrary to it.[26] Whatever the reason and motive behind it might have been, it amounted to a treatment of India such as no proud and self-respecting country can tolerate. We have stood for world co-operation and for the United Nations; we

24. On 21 March, Liaquat Ali Khan said that there was a conspiracy to establish military dictatorship on Communist lines and "for this purpose, economic and constitution-making missions were to be invited from a certain foreign country."

25. On 13 March 1951, Nehru reiterated that the U.N. Commission had worked on the basis that Kashmir was an integral part of India and therefore India considered any attack on Kashmir as an attack on herself. No power could prevent the Kashmir Constituent Assembly from expressing its wishes on the issue of accession.

26. See *ante*, p. 348.

have not stood for and we shall never accept treatment which is unbecoming to a free nation. Our instructions, therefore, to our representative at Lake Success are precise and clear on this issue and we are prepared to face the consequences, whatever they might be.

13. Attempts were made recently to hold what is called a Peace Congress [27] in Delhi. Also another and a somewhat different Congress for Cultural Freedom.[28] Normally it is open to any group to hold such Congresses anywhere they like. It is painful for me to come in the way of any such organizations but, in the circumstances now prevailing, we were compelled to prevent the holding of any conference in Delhi during this difficult period. We are on the eve of *Holi* and mischief-makers might well want to profit by this occasion. We cannot take risks. We did not prohibit either of these Congresses and we said that they could be held in other parts of India. We also said that we would not welcome foreign visitors to the Peace Congress. While any propaganda for peace is always desirable, the object of holding a Peace Congress in India was not apparent. Our country and our policy stand for world peace and we have consistently followed that aim. Unfortunately, under the guise of peace, things are said and done which do not lead to peace. A Peace Congress becomes just an occasion and a cloak for other types of propaganda which lead to an increase of tension between nations.

27. The Congress for Peace was being organized as part of the world peace movement launched in 1948 by the Council of World Peace. On 28 February, the Indian Government informed the Secretary of the Congress that participation of the foreign delegates in the Congress would not be allowed and the venue of the Congress must also be changed. The Congress later met in Bombay in May 1951.

28. The Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom was organized as part of the international movement "to assert the individual's right to freedom in the field of culture against the domination of totalitarian ideologies." The venue of the Congress was shifted from Delhi to Bombay and it was held there from 28 to 31 March 1951.

14. In this connection, I should like to draw your attention to the habit of some organizations or groups to issue large-scale invitations to foreign visitors without any reference to External Affairs. This practice is neither fair to those who are invited nor to us. An impression is created abroad sometimes that the conference is held under semi-official auspices. Eminent men come here under some misapprehension and sometimes undesirable persons also come in. It is necessary, therefore, to be careful about such matters and for Ministers and other members of Government not to associate themselves with such ventures without due enquiry.[29]

15. A recent decision of the Patna High Court about zamindari abolition has raised rather vital issues for all of us.[30] It is well-known that the abolition of the zamindari system has been a principal plank in the Congress programme for many years. Indeed it may well be said that radical agrarian reform is the basic problem of Asia. If this is to be prevented, then our entire social and economic policy fails and the hundreds of millions of peasants and agriculturists can well charge us with a grave breach of promise. An intolerable situation would be created. At the same time, it is obvious that the interpretation of the Constitution is a function of our superior courts. We have to respect the decisions of the courts, for not to do so is to strike at the very root of our constitutional structure. The executive and the judiciary have to pull together, even though they function separately and independently. While our courts have the right to interpret the Constitution and we must respect and honour their decisions, the fact remains that the wider social policy of the country must be determined by Parliament or the State Legislature. Any other course would be

29. K.M. Munshi had inaugurated the session of the Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom.

30. On 12 March 1951, the Patna High Court held the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, as unconstitutional on the ground that it transgressed Article 14 of the Constitution which laid down that "the State shall not deny to any person equality before the laws or the equal protection of the law within the territory of India."

a denial of democracy and a failure on the part of Government to perform its most important function. The Government is no longer an agency for the mere carrying on of routine functions. It has to lay down social policies and give effect to them. Therefore, it has become necessary for us to consider an amendment of the Constitution, so as to remove the lacunae which have apparently crept into it.

16. There has been some trouble in the Punjab, and even more so in Pepsu, over the census operations.[31] It is our misfortune that even in the collection of objective data, we run up against all kinds of passions and prejudices based on a misconceived religious sentiment. With a great effort, we did away with communal electorates, but some kind of a trace of them still remains, which gives rise to new problems. Our Home Ministry has made it clear that we will recognize no data collected by the census which has been vitiated by such passions and prejudices and the pressure of one group against another. This applies more especially to the declarations of language and religion in the Punjab and Pepsu.

17. The time draws near to the general elections. I hope it is clearly understood that these elections will take place in November and December next. Our Election Commissioner's Office is working hard to this end. But before we can finalize our arrangements, it is necessary to pass the Representation of the People Bill in Parliament, to draft rules under that Bill and to delimit constituencies. I hope that Parliament will take up this Bill sometime in April. I have made it clear that Parliament will continue to sit till it has disposed of this urgent measure as well as some other important work.

18. The approach of the general elections has brought into greater prominence the future of what are known as Part 'C'

31. It was reported that people were being asked to declare Punjabi as their mother tongue in place of Hindi and that Harijans were being intimidated to declare themselves as Sikhs.

States.[32] It is a little difficult to treat them by some single formula because they differ greatly among themselves. It seems obviously undesirable to deny them some kind of self-government or autonomy. At the same time, it seems to be forgotten that self-government requires certain basic assumptions; it is not a mere matter of passing of an act in the legislature. You will have seen or read the statement recently made by my colleague, the Minister for States, in regard to the Part 'C' States.[33] This should go a long way to meet the demands of the residents of these States. I might add here that we are having a good deal of trouble in Manipur and Tripura, two border States which are rather difficult of access from the Centre.[34]

19. You know that, for some years past, the problem of food has often overshadowed everything else. We have purchased about four million tons of foodgrains from abroad and we have still some hope of getting a large quantity from the United States. I must confess to you that I have a feeling of failure in regard to our food policy. This does not mean that our attempt at self-sufficiency was wrong or will fail. Under pressure of events, we have dealt with one aspect or another of the food problem. I think we should consider this problem in all its aspects and in some perspective. We cannot go on in a haphazard way. We must know exactly what our position is and

32. Himachal Pradesh, Vindhya Pradesh, Cutch, Manipur, Tripura, Ajmer, Coorg, Bilaspur, Bhopal and Delhi were administered directly by the Centre through Chief Commissioners.

33. On 16 March, N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar informed Parliament of the Government's plan to introduce a Bill to democratize the administration of the Part 'C' States on a permanent basis. The Centre would retain authority to legislate on subjects in the Concurrent and State lists.

34. While the Manipur State Congress and the Ganamukti Parashat in Tripura were demanding institution of popular governments in place of the direct control of the Centre through the Chief Commissioners, there were also left-wing movements for the establishment of independent peasant states. N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, in his statement to Parliament, ruled out the setting up of legislatures in these border areas for "strategic and geographical considerations."

what the future is likely to be. Only then can we fix up any worthwhile and logical programme. That does not mean that we shall get rid of our difficulties, because difficulties are the essence of the present situation. I hope that you and your Government will give thought in this basic way to the entire food question. We propose to do that here at the Centre. If such an examination leads to any far-reaching decision, we shall, of course, consult you. We shall not hesitate to take it if we are satisfied that it is right. It is a matter of deep distress to us to learn of the misery of many of our people, more especially in Madras and Bihar. We shall try to help them, of course, to the best of our ability.

20. I have mentioned above our expectation of getting foodgrains from America. We have asked for two million tons and suggested some deferred or special system of payment for them. In the United States there has been talk of a gift of at least one million tons. To some extent, we made our plans in the hope of getting these foodgrains from the U.S. in April. But April is very near and yet no decision has been taken by the U.S. Congress. I must say that the U.S. Government has thrown its full weight in favour of these foodgrains being sent to India. Nevertheless, the U.S. Congress or its Committees appear to be in no hurry to decide.[35] A stray statement by Shri Bharatan Kumarappa,[36] who was on a private visit to America, appears to have influenced the Congressmen there to such an extent that

35 On 4 March 1951, the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee approved the proposed legislation authorizing Government to grant 2 million tons of grain to India "to help the nation resist Soviet exploitation". The minority report signed by four Republican members proposed that India be given a loan recoverable in kind, i.e., by insisting on India supplying to the United States the materials needed for defence purposes. It was reported on 21 March after the Bill had been referred to the House Rules Committee that the prevailing mood was against the "gift" provision in the Bill. This accounted for delay on the Bill's voting.

36. (1886-1958). Assistant Secretary, All India Village Industries Association, 1935-45.

they delay a decision.[37] *I must say that I find it a little humiliating to wait in this way for favours to be bestowed upon us. I wish we were in a position to stand on our own feet, even though that meant a measure of privation. Indeed, if we can stand on our feet, we can get better terms from other countries. I have no doubt, therefore, that the only possible programme in food we can aim at is one of self-sufficiency. There is no other way out and there is absolutely no reason, except our own ineptness, why we should not attain this objective.*

21. Let us not forget that it is not beyond question that our request for foodgrains from America might not be granted. What then are we to do? Are we to mourn and whine about it? Are we to surrender any basic principles for which we stand in order to induce other countries to be more gracious to us? We would have little self-respect left in our own eyes or in the eyes of others if we behave in this way. Therefore, we must give quiet and full thought to this possible contingency. We shall have to face it not by routine measures but by drastic steps giving this food question the highest priority even at the cost of other important matters. We cannot accept defeat because of pressure tactics of other countries.

22. I was recently in Bombay and I visited the new Government scheme for the supply of pure milk to the city of Bombay. This is called the Aarey Milk Scheme.[38] I was powerfully impressed by what I saw and the Bombay Government is to be congratulated on their magnificent scheme and the success that has already been attained. Here was a constructive way of dealing with this problem which not only provides milk but conserves our useful cattle. Far too often we

37. The minority report of the Foreign Affairs Committee on the India Food Bill quoted Bharatan Kumarappa as saying that "our chief enemy in the Far East is not communism but Western imperialism." On 8 March 1951, the Chairman of the Committee said that several Congressmen, after hearing this report, considered it inexpedient just then to bring forward the Bill for a vote.

38. Under the scheme, a modern plant was set up near Bombay to provide pasteurized milk in sterilized bottles.

only talk about negative methods. We want to pass laws to do this or that without constructive effort. Laws make little difference; it is work that counts. In Gujarat there have been strikes to stop cow-slaughter by law.[39] I am surprised at the folly of such a procedure and at the lack of wisdom of those who think that they can solve this important problem by legislation. Because of this background, I appreciated the Aarey Milk Scheme all the more. I wish other Governments would follow this example.

23. I discuss in these letters international affairs and domestic problems. I wonder if I convey to you in any measure any sense of urgency or any idea of the explosive nature of the world we live in. I am not referring to the possibility of war only. Here in India we are, relatively speaking, a stable and well-organized government. Our critics are many and their criticisms may often be justified, but the fact remains that we are functioning with a considerable measure of success by whatever comparative standards we can judge this. And yet the fact remains that in many ways the situation is explosive and I am distressed at the general lack of realization of this. We talk complacently of elections, we discuss at inordinate length secondary matters in our Assemblies and Parliament, we pride ourselves on our democratic procedure, forgetting that all this is based on certain assumptions. If those assumptions go, then democracy also goes and all its paraphernalia tumbles down. The world today is in the grip of a tremendous problem. There are political problems and even more so economic and social, and behind it all, are psychological conflicts of great magnitude. The spirit of man is in travail. It may be said that dark forces try to overwhelm the world and, consciously or unconsciously, we are striving for survival, wherever we might be. The barriers that to some extent hold these dark forces in any country are not so solid as people imagine. If those barriers go, as they well might, then it will be a bad day for the world or for any country.

39. For example, on 13 March 1951, the textile workers of Ahmedabad went on strike in support of the agitation against cow slaughter.

24. We in India equally face this struggle for survival. I am not exaggerating and I am not, by any means, pessimistic. I believe I have faith in India's future, but I cannot ignore the numerous disruptive and fissiparous tendencies that I see around me, the strange lack of awareness of people and their occupation in trivial matters, forgetting the things that count. Our democracy is a tender plant which has to be nourished with wisdom and care and which requires a great deal of understanding of its real processes and its discipline. It is not just some structure which a Constitution builds up. That structure is lifeless by itself. We have to give it life and purpose. That life must be the spirit and discipline that animates us; that purpose must be a well-recognized social purpose to the realization of which we bend our efforts and our energy.

Yours sincerely
Jawaharlal Nehru

44

New Delhi
10 April, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

This is a letter of apology. I have not written to you at the beginning of this month, as I usually do. Any excuse that I might put forward can hardly be adequate because a procedure we agreed upon should be followed and should not be liable to be upset because of other engagements. Nevertheless, I have to say that I have been exceedingly busy and not keeping too well.

2. I shall not write to you much today, but I should like to draw your attention to a resolution passed by the Working Committee of the Congress yesterday. No doubt you have seen this in the newspapers, but for facility of reference, I give it below:

> The Working Committee have noted with regret a growing lack of discipline among Congressmen as well as in Congress committees and Congress parliamentary parties, and an encouragement of disruptive tendencies, which come in the way of effective work and do injury to the Congress prestige and the objectives for which it works. In the circumstances of today the maintenance of discipline among Congressmen is particularly necessary and breaches of it must be dealt with according to rules made therefor. No separate parties can be formed within the Congress [1] and Congressmen must not

1. In June 1950, the Congress Democratic Party had been formed in the Legislative Assembly of Travancore and Cochin, and the Peoples' Congress Party in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly. On 20 September 1950, J.B. Kripalani had formed a Democratic Front with the aim of opposing corruption, nepotism and "increasing denial of democratic rights" in the Congress Party. Some dissidents in West Bengal and Andhra led by P.C. Ghosh and T. Prakasam respectively also resigned to join this front.

condemn or criticize policies which have been adopted by the Congress or by Congress Governments, except in party or committee meetings.

Members of Congress parliamentary parties must bear this in mind in all their activities in Parliament or the State Assemblies.[2] Any activity contrary to this will be considered a breach of discipline. The Committee, therefore, calls upon all Congressmen, in whatever sphere of activity they may function, to act with restraint and in keeping with the traditions and dignity of the Congress.

3. I attach considerable importance to this resolution. I am afraid we have been lax and the spirit of indiscipline has grown everywhere, whether in our Parliamentary parties or in the Congress organization generally. Perhaps the biggest offenders are our own Parliament and the Congress Parliamentary Party here. I hope that we shall all try to pull ourselves up. The situation is grave enough, both internationally and nationally. The food problem requires the most urgent and concentrated attention. Reports that reach us from Madras and Bihar especially are exceedingly distressing. We are trying our utmost to get food from wherever we can. We had relied on getting a large quantity from the United States of America, but apparently for political reasons, nothing has been decided about this yet. It is obvious that we cannot barter our freedom of choice in regard to our political policy for any gift from abroad. We have said nothing in criticism of what is happening in the American Congress in regard to this proposed food gift and we do not propose to say anything. But the manner in which this has been handled has hurt us. I might mention that the State Department in Washington[3] has done its utmost to

2. For example, some Congress members in the Punjab State Assembly decided to support a no-confidence motion moved by a Socialist member against Gopi Chand Bhargava, the Chief Minister. However, at the meeting of the Congress members of the Assembly on 2 April 1951, the Chief Minister succeeded in retaining the party's confidence and agreed to accommodate other groups in his new Cabinet of Ministers.

3. On 3 April, the State Department warned the Congress that the United States would earn the "lasting hatred" of India if it made a gift of grain conditional, i.e., on India's lifting of the ban on export of "critical" materials like thorium-bearing monazite sands to her.

get this gift through and some of the American newspapers have also strongly advocated this.[4] Nevertheless, sections of American opinion in the Congress have come in the way.[5]

4. We are trying to get food from China, from Soviet Russia, from Burma, Siam and Vietnam—indeed we are trying to get it where we can. China's offer[6] is a very reasonable one, but the real difficulty is that of shipping.

5. You may have read the speech delivered by my colleague, the States Minister, Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar, recently in Parliament.[7] In this he used firm language in regard to the activities of certain rulers. These rulers are following a very wrong and foolish path and we do not propose to treat this lightly.

6. It appears to have become a fashion to talk about scandals in regard to the Government of India, and sometimes Provincial Governments.[8] It is amazing how some of our own people and newspapers talk lightly of these matters and thus bring disrepute to our Government and to our country. In a vast governmental organization there might well be instances of corruption or negligence and we should seize hold of any such that occur and are brought to our notice and take effective

4. For example, in its editorial of 1 April 1950, the *New York Herald Tribune* wrote that the "wheat would be an eloquent ambassador to India and the less haggling and obstructionism that accompany it the better."

5. It was reported that the Bill had been delayed in the House Rules Committee due to the opposition of some Republican and Democrat members from the South.

6. On 31 March 1951, K.M. Munshi informed Parliament that China had offered one million tons of wheat, rice and *milo* against payment in foreign currency.

7. On 3 April 1951, Gopalaswami Ayyangar criticized strongly the formation of the Union of Rulers of the states and their call at Bombay on 2 and 3 April 1951 to protest against the merger and integration of states.

8. These were demands for fuller enquiries into the contracts entered for the import of tractors, jeeps, rifles, fertilizers, sugar and pre-fabricated construction materials.

steps to punish those who are guilty. There should be no leniency about it. But it is wrong and absurd for any responsible person to make vague and general charges without due enquiry and without trying to find out what the truth is.

7. A recent and rather remarkable instance was that of what is called the jeep purchase scandal.[9] I have gone into this thoroughly and I am convinced that there has been no impropriety about it and there has ultimately been no loss to the State. We had to order these jeeps urgently because of the great need at the time. Because of this urgency, we had to try to get what we could. It was a seller's market. There was not adequate inspection, although the firms employed for this purpose were of the first standing. There were errors of judgement, but it is quite clear to me that there was no wrong doing and, as I have stated, we have not lost any money thereby. In spite of this, the most amazing statements have been made in Parliament and elsewhere about this so-called scandal.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

9. A demand was made in Parliament on 26 March 1951 for a judicial enquiry into the contract for purchase of jeeps for Rs. 80 lakhs signed by the Government with a British firm in 1948. It was alleged that despite the payment in advance of a sum of Rs. 23 lakhs, 155 jeeps supplied by the firm had to be rejected as unserviceable. On 30 March, the Government clarified that only Rs. 17 lakhs were paid in advance; the deal had therefore been cancelled and an enquiry instituted.

45

New Delhi
21 April, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The world appears to continue on its crooked course and few things happen that cheer us and many take place that are distressing. No doubt it is not the fault of the world; nor does the fault lie with the stars. Nevertheless, we seem to be swept by powerful and apparently uncontrollable forces in a direction that is full of peril. Perhaps, living in the midst of these happenings, we take too gloomy a view of events in the long perspective of history. Our troubles of today may not have any great significance. There have been periods in the past which must have appeared to the men and women of that age as full of danger and peril. Today all that is just a page of history for the generations that have succeeded. So also other generations might not be unduly troubled by what might oppress us today.

2. It is foolish to be pessimistic; it is equally foolish to adopt a facile optimism which shuts its eyes to obvious facts when they are disagreeable. We have somehow to balance the intensity of the present, which affects us so much and demands our labour, with the calm perspective of history. We have to keep our balance of mind even though strong gusts of wind and passion blow about and disturb us. We have, above all, to keep some ideal, some objective in view and some faith in our capacity to work for it. If that vision goes and that faith disappears, then we have no function left.

3. At the present moment, almost all over the world, there appear to be strong forces at work which, if left unchecked, can only lead to a progressive or a sudden disintegration of society as we know it. There are, of course, other forces at work too, which check this downward tendency and bring us a glimmer of hope.

4. The war in Korea continues interminably and there appears to be no prospect of its ending or even a ceasefire. There are frequent references in the press to some magic step being taken which might suddenly end it.[1] India is often mentioned in this connection as if we held the keys to peace. I wish we did. I believe that the foreign policy we have pursued has been demonstrably proved to be good for India and good for world peace. I think that it has averted or helped in averting the spread of the Korean war. It has forced many people to think on different lines and checked that lining up of people's minds which become blind to everything except their own way of thinking. The mere fact that both our friends and our critics inevitably look to India to take some step to break the present impasse in the world, is itself significant of the virtue of India's foreign policy.

5. I need not tell you we have given constant thought to the international position and to the possibility of doing something to lessen present-day tensions. We have kept in fairly close touch with the Foreign Offices of Great Powers which are lined up against each other. We would have gladly taken some further step if there had been any hope of success.[2] But, without such hope, such a step becomes purely adventurist and often does harm. So, in spite of pressure and repeated invitation, we have not taken any public step. But privately we have constantly tried to put various viewpoints before foreign chancellories and tried to find out what their reactions were. Thus far the gap has been too wide for even an attempt to be made to bridge it.

1. Unconfirmed reports suggested that twelve Arab and Asian countries at Lake Success were informed by China on 18 April that the Chinese might agree to a ceasefire in Korea following MacArthur's dismissal.

2. On 18 April, B.N. Rau clarified that he had not received any request from the Arab-Asian group to ask the Indian ambassador at Beijing to make any approach to the Chinese Government.

6. General MacArthur's dismissal from his commands in the Far East[3] undoubtedly brought a feeling of relief to Asia and Europe and parts of America.[4] MacArthur's ability as a General has stood very high. But his amazing capacity to queer the pitch politically has more than counterbalanced his military ability. No one exactly knew what might happen so long as MacArthur was in command. With his removal from the scene of action, this constant danger has gone. But that does not mean that we are any nearer peace in the Far East or elsewhere. In the United States there has been, as was perhaps to be expected, a tendency on the part of the administration to indicate that they are as strong as ever and that they will not tone down their policies in the slightest degree.[5] In China, I have little doubt that MacArthur's removal must have been welcomed. But I do not think that they have attached much importance to it. They are, after all, much more interested in the basic policies that are being followed than in the fate of individuals, however important they might be. It is the Chinese view that MacArthur's removal had mainly to do with the internal policies of the United States; otherwise there has been no appreciable change. The Chinese Government has recently complained of bombing by American, or possibly Chiang Kai-shek's planes, of a part of the Chinese coast.[6] This has been vehemently denied by the U.S. As you know, China has attached the greatest importance to Formosa. You will

3. On 11 April, Truman announced that MacArthur had been relieved of all his commands as he was "unable to give his whole-hearted support to United States and U.N. policies in matters pertaining to his official duties."

4. The spokesman of the British Foreign Office welcomed on 11 April Truman's action against MacArthur and stated that the dismissal had proved that "the U.S.A. and their Allies want a peaceful solution." In the United States, the decision was welcomed by the Democrats and supported by the *New York Times, New York Herald Tribune* and several other newspapers.

5. The U.S. State Department on 11 April reiterated that there would be no change in their policies.

6. The Chinese reported on 12 April 1951 that the U.S. planes had bombed the border city of Antung and had raided Manchuria repeatedly on 30 and 31 March, and 7 and 11 April 1951.

remember also the Cairo and Potsdam declarations regarding Formosa which promised to hand it over to China. The principles that the United Nations laid down in January last for a peace in the Far East contained a reference to Formosa,[7] which could only be interpreted in terms of the Cairo declaration. These principles were at the time accepted not only by the United Kingdom and some other countries but also by the U.S.A. Now MacArthur has openly declared that Formosa was essential for American security and therefore must be kept.[8] In this matter probably MacArthur reflects a strong body of opinion in the United States and, in any event, the U.S. Government cannot go against this widespread sentiment there. Here then is the complete deadlock between the U.S. position and that of China. Even if some way out might be found for Korea, this is so intimately associated with Formosa now that it cannot be separated from it.

7. The fact of the matter is that Korea and Formosa become just pointers to certain basic conflicts to which one sees no obvious solution. In Europe the representatives of the Great Powers continue their interminable discussions and cannot even decide on the agenda for a conference.[9] In spite of this, it might be said that there is no near chance of large-scale warfare. But the basic reasons for it continue and preparation goes on for it on a colossal scale. How long will this continue, without some kind of an eruption, unless some radical change of approach and policy took place?

8. We are affected in many ways in spite of our policy to avoid alignment for war. The heavy programmes for rearmament produce scarcity of raw materials and generally inflationary tendencies all over the world. They make it difficult for us or for any country to get machinery or other capital goods. We begin to suffer with the rest of the world from the war

7. See *ante*, p. 313.
8. Address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress on 19 April 1951.
9. See *ante*, p. 358.

atmosphere and war preparations which become the principal activities of today.

9. Within our own country, the situation is far from encouraging. The first issue as ever is that of food and we have had grave reports of conditions prevailing in Bihar and some parts of Madras. Alarmist speeches have been delivered by responsible persons.[10] We must recognize the gravity of the situation and do our utmost to meet it. At the same time, we must not allow ourselves to exaggerate or to be oppressed too much.

10. The food situation has two major aspects—(1) how to meet the present crisis, and (2) how to solve this problem basically. The first naturally engrosses our attention, but the second is equally important and has to be tackled from now. The immediate difficulty has inevitably to be met by large-scale imports of foodgrains; as you must know, we have tried to get them from the four quarters of the earth. We have purchased nearly four million tons and we are trying to get more and more. Even what we have purchased cannot easily be brought here for lack of shipping. In this connection, I should like to say that we have been greatly helped by the British Government who have gone out of their way to see that we got the necessary ships. Recently, the U.S. Government also allowed us to use some of their old mothball ships. There is, therefore, some improvement in the shipping situation and we hope that adequate quantities of food will flow in. Yet, the margin between now and the monsoon is a narrow one.

11. For some months now, the proposed gift of foodgrains from America has hung somewhere in the air. You will remember that what we asked for was not a gift but for payment on easy and deferred terms. If the gift comes, we are

10. For example, on 11 April 1951, Anugraha Narain Singh, the Food Minister of Bihar, spoke of the growing spectre of hunger and starvation in Bihar and believed that immediate prospects of relief were bleak.

not going to refuse it. But we have repeatedly made it clear that we cannot barter away our domestic or foreign policies for gifts from abroad, however much we might need the latter. It may be a hard choice, but is an inevitable one. The latest news from the U.S. is that Congress there is thinking of giving us foodgrains partly as gift and partly as loan.[11] The situation is none too hopeful. But perhaps we might get something at least from them. I might mention here that the delay has not been caused by governmental action in the U.S., as the State Department has tried its utmost to send us this gift.[12] But some members of Congress there, who have the power to delay, have exercised it.

12. Meanwhile, we are approaching both the Soviet Union and China and both have made substantial offers of foodgrains to us.[13] The Chinese offer is a more attractive one from the point of view of price. The difficulty there is that of shipping. We have sent one of our officers to Peking to fix up matters there and we have immediately bought some quantity of rice from South China. The Russian offer has one advantage – the Soviets will supply most of the shipping needed. But the price quoted for wheat is very high and there is an insistence on our supplying some commodities which we ourselves lack, like raw jute and raw cotton. We are trying to get rice from both Burma

11. On 20 April, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee suggested supply of wheat to India on "half-loan half-grant basis", the loan to be repaid through supply of strategic materials. India was asked to keep an amount equivalent to the cost of wheat supplied on grant basis in special deposit and also to meet the freight charges for the wheat to be transported in U.S. ships.

12. On 16 April 1951, Acheson urged the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to expedite sanction of at least one million tons of wheat as a grant to meet India's immediate requirements.

13. It was announced on 26 April that China would supply 50,000 tons of rice by the end of June and on 22 May, she agreed to a further supply of 40,000 tons of *milo* within six months. The Soviet Union also agreed on 10 May to supply 50,000 tons of wheat against payment in cash.

and Siam[14] and our Food Minister is likely to go to Rangoon for this purpose soon.

13. There is one matter that I should like to bring to your particular notice. While a good part of India is suffering privation and sometimes near starvation, it yet remains true that in some other parts there are surpluses of foodgrains. And yet, as it is, we cannot somehow get hold of this surplus. In some parts the surplus is sold openly at a trifle over controlled prices. This curious situation is almost Gilbertian, if it was not so tragic. The Central Government cannot directly procure from these areas and the Provincial Governments either will not or cannot. I should have thought that at this time of crisis, nothing would be allowed to come in the way of our tapping all our resources in food. But some of our State Governments think more of their States than of the rest of India, not perhaps realizing fully that what happens to other parts of India ultimately affects them also powerfully. This is a very serious matter and I would like you to give serious thought to it. Cannot those areas which have a surplus be made to supply a great part of this surplus; cannot procurement by State agency be intensified? Or is there some means of our gaining our ends! It becomes increasingly impossible to look on at this obvious unfairness which is doing so much harm to our country.

14. Most of the States have their Food Ministers. The Food Ministers' business today is of the first importance and the most capable person should be appointed Food Minister. In addition, there might well be special small committees of the Cabinet in each State to deal with this food problem not only in the State but in relation to the whole of India.

14. Burma had agreed to supply 240,000 tons of rice within six months and 350,000 tons annually thereafter; and Thailand agreed to supply 300,000 tons of rice immediately.

At last we took action. We have, however, given an opportunity to the Maharaja to make his submission to the President within a month and he has already done so.[17] The President will soon decide as to how we should deal with this matter.[18] We want justice done and any kind of unfairness avoided. But, at the same time, it must be remembered that this is purely a political matter and cannot be determined by a recourse to the judiciary.

16. The situation in Nepal has been a troubled one and the old conflict between those who are now popular Ministers and those who are the upholders of the Rana regime has suddenly burst out afresh.[19] The conflict itself did not last long and the Government gained rapid control. The King played a notable

15. On 13 April, the President derecognized Pratap Singh Gaekwad as ruler of Baroda under Article 366 (22) of the Constitution and recognized his son's succession as the ruler. The charges against him were: (1) his failure to return to the state a sum of Rs. 235 lakhs which was due from him, (2) fomenting agitation against merger of states, (3) organizing and financing reactionary movements prejudicial to the security of his state, and (4) actively working for the formation of the Union of Rulers despite warnings from the Government of India.

16. Pratap Singh Gaekwad (1908-1968).

17. On 20 April, he denied all charges and pleaded for his reinstatement.

18. On 21 May, the President confirmed Government's decision to withdraw recognition to the ex-ruler of Baroda, but announced that the Government would consider his request for allowances and residential accommodation and permit him to use the title of His Highness "as a matter of courtesy."

19. When the Prime Minister, Mohun Shumshere Jung Bahadur, was charged with a conspiracy to have B.P. Koirala, the Home Minister, murdered, the conflict between the rival political factions in the ministerial ranks took a serious turn. As a result, King Tribhuvan dismissed the Prime Minister on 15 April 1951.

part. This incident has shown up the weakness of the old Rana regime. They have neither the populace nor the army with them. The situation continues to be delicate there and Nepal is passing through a revolutionary phase. We have no wish to interfere; but we cannot allow troubles to go on in our neighbouring country. We have taken, jointly with the Nepal Government, action in some of our border areas. It is possible that the old Maharaja, Prime Minister, as well as some of the new popular Ministers, might come to Delhi for consultation with us.[20]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. The crisis was resolved when after meeting Nehru on 16 May, during their ten-day stay in Delhi from 9 to 18 May, it was announced that Rana Shumshere Jung Bahadur would continue as the Prime Minister.

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New Delhi
2 May, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to you on the eve, or rather in the midst of, important meetings in New Delhi. For the last two days, I have been conferring with some old friends and colleagues who are Chief Ministers or Ministers in some of our Governments. Tomorrow the Congress Working Committee will begin its meetings and two days later the All India Congress Committee will meet.[1]

2. What the Congress does or does not do is of course a matter of great interest to all Congressmen. But it has a much wider interest also because its decisions affect our entire political future. By the fact of its past history, as well as its present position, it has become an integrated and essential part of public life and activities in India. Even those who criticize it vigorously, and sometimes even bitterly, recognize this dominant part. Indeed, it is due to this very fact that all manner of groups and parties find some kind of common bond in their opposition of the Congress. Whatever the merits or the demerits of the Congress today, it is, as it has been, the major fact in India.

3. During these last two days' discussions, we have talked mostly of some of the basic problems of India and of the definite objectives that we should have. In the old days the Congress had a precise political objective, namely independence, and a broad social objective. This social objective was laid down in many resolutions and it was

1. The Working Committee met on 3 May and decided on the agenda for the meeting of the All India Congress Committee on 5 and 6 May 1951.

necessarily rather vague and did not deal with the specific problems of the day. We have to have that distant objective still. But it is no longer possible to deal in vague terms with what we have to do. Perhaps many of our difficulties during recent years have been due to this lack of precision in our economic policy. We have dealt with problems as they arose and not in their entirety. It was with a view to get this full picture and definite priorities, with a view to march towards our proclaimed social objective, that we started the Planning Commission. The Commission has worked hard and, I believe, profitably. As they have wrestled with the problems before them, these have grown and their labours multiplied. Nevertheless, I hope that the first fruit of their labours, in the shape of a preliminary report, will reach us early in June. That will help us greatly, I am sure, in formulating our plans and in thinking in a constructive and integrated way of the problems before us.

4. Food continues to be our primary occupation at the present moment. Last evening I delivered a broadcast on the food situation[2] and I tried to point out its gravity and the need to tackle it with all the resources at our command. I have suggested various methods[3] in which people generally can join us and I should like to draw your special attention to this. I hope to send you further instructions about these various approaches. But the first essential continues to be procurement and it is on this that we must concentrate. There is a tendency to relax in the surplus provinces and areas. This has to be combated and every effort made to get all surplus foodgrains to the areas which are suffering from a severe lack at present. We are, as you know, doing our utmost to get foodgrains from

2. On 1 May 1951.

3. He suggested, as an immediate step, procurement of foodgrains but wanted no effort to be spared to grow food wherever it can be done. He wanted in each village a committee to assume responsibility to meet the requirements of the village through increased production, securing the release of hoarded stocks for public distribution and by creating an awareness among villagers to avoid waste of food.

outside. But whatever we may get, we still want more and ultimately our success and failure will be measured by the amount we procure within the country.

5. The long argument in the United States of America for sending foodgrains to India continues. While it is perfectly true that the State Department of the United States has tried its utmost to expedite these delicate processes and a nonofficial food emergency committee for India has done splendid work in the U.S., it has not been pleasing for us to be made the subject of continuous comment and criticism in the American Congress. We do not yet know what foodgrains will come from America as a result of these Bills that are being considered there. We do not know how far this will be a gift or a loan and what the other conditions are likely to be. From day to day, changes are made there. You can well imagine that this long drawn-out agony has done no good to us or to the U.S. We shall, of course, gladly and gratefully accept any offer, but we have made it perfectly clear that we will not accept any conditions which we consider derogatory or which are aimed at our changing our domestic or international policy.

6 From China some food ships are on their way to India and we have sent a representative to Peking[4] to arrange for further shipments. As regards the offer from Soviet Russia, some general preliminaries have been settled and negotiations will begin soon in Delhi to settle details. Our Food Minister has gone to Burma[5] to get rice from there.

7. Some days ago, a riot occurred in Cooch-Behar,[6] which unhappily ended in firing and the death of a few persons including children. This was surprising because Cooch-Behar is not a deficit area and there should have been no real scarcity there. But, oddly enough, prosperity itself brings about

4. K.R. Damle, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Food, went to Beijing on 15 April to negotiate the supply of one million tons of foodgrains by China.
5. On 1 May 1951.
6. The police fired upon a procession on 21 April 1951.

conditions of scarcity. The people of Cooch-Behar, or at any rate some of them called the *jothedars*, have profited considerably from tobacco and other crops. Hence their holding capacity for wheat has grown and this wheat does not come into the market. Because of this, prices shot up there[7] and somewhat artificial conditions of scarcity were produced. Enquiries are going on[8] to fix responsibility for this riot and its handling. But it appears to be clear that it was more in the nature of a politically organized riot than one due chiefly to food scarcity. Whatever the facts, Cooch-Behar is a pointer and a warning to all of us.

8. You will have learnt that a new popular Ministry has been formed in Rajasthan with Shri Jainarain Vyas[9] as Chief Minister. Rajasthan is a heavy and difficult charge for any government and conditions there have deteriorated during the past months. The law and order situation is not satisfactory and there are many inner disruptive forces at work. The *jagirdars* naturally do not like any attack on their vested interests and tend to resist these. Though famous in Indian history, in some ways this large area is much more backward than other parts of India. I hope, however, that the new Ministry will tackle these difficult problems successfully.

9. It is proposed to have a popular Ministry in Pepsu also very soon.[10]

10. The situation in the Punjab has been very disquieting and there has been progressive deterioration in many ways. Politically, there has been a conflict between more or less evenly

7. The price of rice had increased in some places from Rs. 55 to Rs. 65 per maund within a course of one week in April.

8. The enquiry into the firing was started on 29 April and its report was submitted on 1 May 1951.

9. (1898-1963). Congressman from Rajasthan; General Secretary, All India States People's Conference, 1939-49; Chief Minister, Rajasthan, 1951-54. Vyas was sworn in as Chief Minister on 26 April 1951.

10. A Ministry comprising eight Ministers and headed by Col. Raghbir Singh took office on 23 May 1951.

balanced groups (both Congress) in the State Legislature. This is reflected, to some extent, in the province. There is also a communal problem as between Hindus and Sikhs. The Congress Parliamentary Board gave a great deal of thought to this and ultimately put forward a proposal [11] which is rather unusual and which may also be described as not in keeping with normal democratic methods. But, in the peculiar circumstances of the case, this seemed the only step to take. This step may lead to some results which ease the situation. But I fear that various kind of conflicts will still continue. It must always be remembered that East Punjab is one of our frontier provinces in a most vital area. We cannot therefore permit any deterioration there which would have far-reaching results.

11. The Security Council of the United Nations has recently appointed Dr. Graham [12] as the U.N. representative and mediator. As a mediator, we would have welcomed him. But, if he comes to implement the last resolution of the Security Council,[13] then we can offer him no help. We are determined not to accept that resolution and not to work in accordance with it.

11. The Central Parliamentary Board meeting from 7 to 11 April 1951 decided that Gopichand Bhargava should continue as the Chief Minister but should reshuffle his Ministry, in consultation with the members of the Board by including in it some members belonging to the dissident group. The Board also directed that the Ministry should continue to get the support of two rival Akali Sikh groups.

12. Frank Graham (1886-1972). Professor of History at North Carolina University; appointed United Nations mediator in the Kashmir dispute on 1 May 1951.

13. Britain and the United States, taking note of the objections of India and Pakistan to the resolution of 21 February, successfully moved on 30 March 1951 a revised draft resolution which dropped all references to the U.N. force and to the possible division of the state to meet partially India's and Pakistan's objections respectively. However, the provision of arbitration and also the paragraph about convening of the Constituent Assembly were retained. India opposed the resolution. See *ante*, p. 348, fn 17.

12. Parliament is continuing one of its longest sessions. It will probably continue its work till almost the end of this month. We have to get through some very important measures. The first of these is the Representation of the People Bill which is essential from the point of view of the coming elections. Then there is the delimitation of constituencies which will be laid down in a Presidential Order. This Order will have to be placed before Parliament for twenty days and can be challenged or varied by it. There has been a good deal of controversy on this subject which was perhaps natural as many interests were involved and they often pulled in different directions.

13. Another very important measure is one to amend the Constitution.[14] In the course of this amendment we shall endeavour to get some lacunae filled. But the main purpose of the amendment is twofold: one to remove certain difficulties owing to judicial interpretation of fundamental rights; some recent decisions by inferior courts have carried this interpretation to extraordinary lengths.[15] The other part of the Constitution, which needs urgent amendment, relates to social measures relating to land which various States Assemblies have passed and which have been held up by judicial decisions.

14. Agrarian reform is by and large the most vital and urgent of our problems. The National Congress has been interested in this for the last twenty years or more. There can be no doubt that present conditions cannot continue and the proposed reforms are long overdue. It has therefore become essential to widen the scope somewhat of the Constitution in regard to such agrarian reforms.

15. A proposal was recently made to postpone our general elections. Many reasons were advanced for this and some of

14. The States were to be enabled through amendments of Articles 19 and 31 to place restrictions on the freedom of speech in the interests of public order and remove obstacles in the implementation of the zamindari abolition acts.

15. See *ante*, p. 324.

them had weight.[16] But the arguments against postponement were overwhelming. We do not propose therefore to bring about any postponement of these elections. It is possible that, in order to suit the convenience of some States, there might be a few weeks' postponement.

16. The Railwaymen's Federation has decided to take a strike ballot.[17] This is a serious development. Railwaymen, in common with others, are suffering from high prices. But a strike at the present moment is not only the height of unwisdom but will also do grave injury to food transport which is so essential at present.

17. You must have read about the coming ceremonies at Somnath temple.[18] Many people have been attracted to this and some of my colleagues are even associated with it in their individual capacities.[19] But it should be clearly understood that this function is not governmental and the Government of India as such has nothing to do with it. While it is easy to understand a certain measure of public support to this venture, we have to remember that we must not do anything which comes in the way of our State being secular. That is the basis of our Constitution and Governments, therefore, should refrain from associating themselves with anything which tends to affect the secular character of our State. There are, unfortunately, many communal tendencies at work in India today and we have to be

16. For example, on 17 April 1951, the Madras Legislative Council unanimously passed a non-official resolution urging the Central Government to hold general elections in February 1952 as at that time a larger number of voters would be able to cast votes than in the months of December and January when rains and the harvesting time would prevent a number of them from going to the polling booths.

17. On 25 April 1951. The Federation's main demands were payment of dearness allowance on the scale recommended by the Pay Commission, and creation of a permanent machinery for the settlement of disputes with provision for arbitration.

18. The installation ceremony of the deity at the Somnath temple was performed by Dr. Rajendra Prasad on 11 May 1951.

19. N.V. Gadgil and K.M. Munshi participated in the ceremonies.

on our guard against them. It is important that Governments should keep the secular and non-communal ideal always before them.

18. In Nepal things are quieter, but the internal crisis has not been resolved. Our interest in Nepal is obvious. But we do not wish to do anything in the shape of interference with a friendly and independent country. We have helped a good deal, and with success, in carrying out joint action with the Nepal Government on the border areas, where for some time disorder prevailed and gangs of men were doing mischief. In about a week's time, the Prime Minister of Nepal and some of his Ministers are coming to Delhi for consultations with us.

19. An outstanding event of recent weeks has been the demand of the people of Iran for nationalization of the oil industry there. A decree to this effect has just been promulgated in Iran. In England, the resignation of a very popular Minister, Aneurin Bevan,[20] had led to a political crisis.[21] There is not much chance of this crisis leading to a break up of the Labour Government. I think that that Government is likely to continue for some months when a general election will probably take place. In Korea, there has been some slowing down of the Chinese attack. Seoul, however, is on the verge of falling.[22] The general situation in the Far East

20. (1897-1960). British Labour Party leader; editor, *The Tribune*, 1942-45; Minister of Health, 1945-51; Minister of Labour, January to April 1951; Deputy Leader of the Labour Party and of the Opposition, 1959-60.

21. Bevan, Harold Wilson, President of the Board of Trade, and John Freeman, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Supply, resigned on 21 April because of disagreement with the Government's economic and financial policies. It was feared that there would be a split in the Labour Party which would bring down the Government after 15 months as it had an overall majority of only 5 in the House of Commons. But the split was averted.

22. The Chinese and the North Koreans launched a powerful counter-offensive on the night of 22-23 April, recrossed the 38th parallel, and on 28 April, advanced to within five miles of Seoul. The U.N. forces, however, had by 1 May halted the Communist offensive.

is exceedingly unsatisfactory. Both the U.S.A. and China have taken up an attitude which is incompatible with the other. Therefore, the deadlock is likely to continue and there is not much chance of a ceasefire or any other approach which may lead to a powerful solution.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
17 May, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

We have been having a heavy time here. The Parliamentary session is prolonging itself and is a great burden. Most members, including the Ministers, are growing rather stale and tired, but there is no help for it. We have to pass certain legislation during this session. There is the Constitution Amendment Bill,[1] the People Representation Bill, the 'C' Class States Bill[2] and the Delimitation matters. All these encounter heavy weather and I cannot yet say when the session will be over. It is likely to go on till the 10th of June and possibly a few days more.

2. Apart from the heavy work of the session, I have had to deal with the Nepal situation[3] and the Punjab confusion. For the last week the Prime Minister and other Ministers of Nepal have been here. With some difficulty we have composed their

1. The Constitution (First Amendment) Bill sought to remove certain difficulties which had been brought to light by judicial decisions and pronouncements especially in regard to fundamental rights. Its main provisions were: (1) to enable the State to make special provisions for the advancement of backward classes, scheduled castes and tribes; (2) to impose restrictions on the exercise of individual's right of freedom of speech and expression; (3) to enable the State to make laws restricting the individual's right to engage in any trade or start an industry which might be inconsistent with the programme of nationalization; and (4) to secure the constitutional validity of the agrarian reform laws in general, and certain specified State acts in particular.

2. The Bill for the democratization of Part 'C' States provided for the creation of Legislatures in some States and setting up of Advisory Boards in others.

3. See *ante*, p. 381.

differences and they will be going back to Nepal in a day or two. But such success as we have obtained cannot carry things very far unless the people concerned are themselves interested in co-operating with each other. Unfortunately, this desire for co-operation has not been much in evidence and there has been a great deal of suspicion on every side. The old Rana regime has no future in Nepal, that is, anything like its past. The change-over three months ago broke up the old regime. The Ranas continue to function in a somewhat minor key; their influence, however, has progressively declined. An attempt to bring back old times collapsed and led to a strengthening of the Nepal Congress elements.

3. It may be said therefore that the old style Ranas are a fading institution in Nepal. But they still continue and can make a difference. Our own advice has been to keep them in the picture because they can be useful in many ways and they cannot now do much harm. But the important elements in Nepal today are the King and the Nepal Congress. There are a number of other political groups and parties, but they are too small to make much difference. The representatives of the Nepal Congress are young and inexperienced and have not shown always the tact that is so necessary in a delicate situation. However, for the present, old differences have been patched up and the present set-up will continue with some changes in the Cabinet. It is proposed to have an Advisory Council, largely elected from the Districts. This ought to serve a useful purpose and to bring in other elements into the picture. In Nepal there are three kinds of people—the people of the *Terai* on the Indian border, the Gurkhas in the hills and the Newars in the Kathmandu valley. Thus far, the Gurkhas have been considered the most important element in the population and they will, no doubt, continue to be important. The *Terai* are the most numerous and probably most of the revenue of Nepal comes from the *Terai*. But these people have had little say in the internal affairs and even now they feel that they should have more attention paid to them. The Newars in Kathmandu, etc., are relatively small in number, but being in the Capital city and round about, play an important and sometimes even an

aggressive part in the political changes that are taking place. In order to have stability in Nepal, there must be some balance between all these three groups.

4. I have referred to the Punjab confusion. In some ways it is worse than confusion and certain recent developments there have made the situation potentially much worse.[4] It is a tragedy that this fine province should be so full of political factions and should be unable to display a spirit of co-operative enterprise.

5. Since my last letter to you, the All India Congress Committee met in Delhi.[5] Oddly enough, attention was concentrated not so much on the A.I.C.C. meetings but on what happened outside. The dissolution of the Democratic Front appeared to bring us nearer to some kind of unity.[6] But very soon after, this prospect receded.[7] Since then, we have been on the verge of a major split in the Congress. Thus far this has not taken place and there is just an odd chance of its being avoided. Unfortunately there is a lessening of the spirit of discipline and cohesiveness which held us together, through fair weather or foul, for a quarter of a century or more.

6. One recent development in Congress politics has rather distressed me. Important developments take place and

4. The Chief Minister of the Punjab refused to reconstitute his Ministry to accommodate members of the dissident group who were elected to the panel of ministers at the meeting of the Punjab Assembly Congress Party convened on 13 May 1951 as per the directive of the Congress Parliamentary Board. On 16 May, the Congress Parliamentary Board informed Bhargava that it was not willing to modify its directive and called upon him to accommodate the dissident group. See also *ante*, pp. 370 and 386.

5. From 5 to 6 May 1951.

6. In response to the unity call given by Nehru and Azad, the meeting of the Democratic Congress Front on 3 May resolved to dissolve their six-month old party "to create a better atmosphere for unity in the Congress."

7. On 6 May 1951, the talks of rapprochement between the Congress and members of the Democratic Front broke down when P.D. Tandon, President of the Congress, refused to reconstitute the Working Committee or the Central Election Committee.

decisions are taken not in the A.I.C.C., but rather in small groups outside. There is thus a development of what might be called backstair or parlour politics. This itself is significant in indicating that we are cutting ourselves off to some extent from the mass movements and the large-scale contacts of the people that have been the backbone of the Congress. I think that for the sake of healthy politics, we should discuss our important affairs in our larger Congress Committees or in the Congress session itself. A recent suggestion has just been made that a special session of the A.I.C.C. should be held and a requisition for that purpose sent. This session would deal with those problems which have been thus far discussed in parlours and private rooms. Whether such a session is going to be held or not, I do not know. But in any event a meeting of the A.I.C.C. will have to take place fairly soon to consider the election manifesto, etc.[8]

7. At the present moment, the most important development in international affairs is the resolution before the U.N. in favour of an embargo on China.[9] This seems to us a wrong approach. The Aggressor Resolution four months ago was bad enough and put an end to any immediate prospect of a peaceful settlement. Now, driven further in that direction, the U.S.A. has proposed the embargo resolution and they have succeeded in gaining the support of the U.K., which had thus far opposed such a move. This resolution will no doubt be passed. But what good it can do, it is difficult to understand. It will stiffen all the parties in their respective attitudes and take us just one step further towards war. That war is not likely to take place for some months at least. But fear of war and preparation for war are widespread.

8. The A.I.C.C. met at Bangalore from 13 to 15 July, and adopted the election manifesto on 14 July 1951.

9. The resolution passed by the U.N. General Assembly on 18 May called on all nations to ban the shipment of strategic war materials to the People's Republic of China and North Korea.

8. There have been reports in the press of Mr. Graham being appointed the U.N. mediator in Kashmir. We have had no official intimation of this and we do not know when he will come. While we are always prepared to talk about any matter, we are not prepared to implement the Security Council resolution in regard to Kashmir in any way.[10]

9. The question of food is now attracting far more attention and effort, as an awareness of the situation comes to the people. In the U.S.A., people still talk about a gift or a loan of 2 million tons of wheat. I do not know when this will materialize. Meanwhile, there has been a feeling of resentment in India at the long delays and obstructionist tactics of some people in the American Congress.[11] Meanwhile, the U.S.S.R. have despatched 50,000 tons and are going to follow it up with more of it. Negotiations for a barter of Russian wheat with Indian commodities are in progress in Delhi. From China too, rice and *milo* are coming. One of the chief difficulties as ever is that of shipping.

10. The food situation in Bihar and Madras is not at all good. While people may not die of famine, there is continuing under-nourishment. Steps have been taken in Bihar to set up 5,000 fair price shops and these have helped greatly. The danger to us is not so much of a regular famine, but rather of continuing under-nourishment resulting in a general deterioration of the people and a lessening of their capacity to work. Indeed, in Bihar, rural unemployment has risen greatly and it has become essential for public works to be started to keep these people employed.

11. While the situation continues to be difficult, we are in a position now to say that we shall be able to keep up some supply

10. See *ante*, p. 386.

11. For example, *The Times of India*, commenting editorially on 11 May on the U.S. Congressional policy stated that "It is not humane to dangle food beyond a starving man's reach, nor is it proper to lacerate his misery by turning the knife in the wound."

of foodgrains in the scarcity areas. We are thus relatively safe for the next two months or so. If nothing further happens during these two months, then our position will be much graver. But we hope that in any event foodgrains will come to us by then from other countries. What other countries might or might not do, it is increasingly clear that we have to rely on ourselves. Not to do so is to invite repeated disappointments and to go some steps towards a major disaster.

12. You must have seen my broadcast[12] about food in which I made certain suggestions. I called for gift foodgrains for Bihar and Madras and called upon the people to miss a meal a week and donate the money thus saved for Bihar relief. I think there is considerable importance in these personal appeals. Perhaps the amount of gift foodgrains we get will not be very large, although from all accounts big collections are being made. These gift foodgrains will be kept apart from the normal ration supply and will be used as gifts, more especially to women and children.

13. Another suggestion I made was to have village committees whose chief function should be to see to it that no one starves in their village. Their second function will be to prevent hoarding and to disclose the names of big-scale hoarders in their areas. I attach much importance to this suggestion and I hope that in your State you will encourage the formation of these committees in rural areas. If this committee system works at all, it will make a vast difference in the psychological approach to this problem. It will bring in popular co-operation without which our official efforts cannot go far. I hope therefore that you will specially interest yourself in the formation of these committees, which should be non-official.

12. On 1 May 1951. See *ante*, p. 383.

14. You must have heard of Shri Vinoba Bhave's[13] tour in Hyderabad and especially in Telengana.[14] This is worthy of special attention. From all accounts, his tour has already resulted in a marked improvement in the situation. This tour demonstrates to us that a psychological and friendly approach often yields greater results than coercion.

15. The Bill for the amendment of the Constitution is meeting with a good deal of opposition in the press and elsewhere.[15] We hope however to get it through, even though that requires a two-thirds majority and half the total members attending. I think that much of the criticism is misconceived. There is a strange fear in the minds of some that Parliament might misbehave and therefore should not have too much powers given to it in such matters. The peculiar urgency of these amendments arose because of certain judicial decisions which came in the way of zamindari abolition legislation.

16. Some time ago, I drew your attention to what has been known as the Etawah project.[16] I am now sending you a note on this which will enable you to form some idea of the progress made.[17]

13. (1895-1982). Follower of Mahatma Gandhi, selected by him to inaugurate individual satyagraha in 1940; after 1947 started the *Bhoodan* movement to collect land through donation for distribution among the landless; toured practically the entire country on foot on this mission covering more than 40,000 miles.

14. During his *padyatra* (the walking tour) of Telengana between 15 April and 6 June 1951, Vinoba Bhave received about 12,000 acres of land as donation after touring 200 villages, and distributed 9,000 acres among the landless. He also settled 500 village disputes during this tour.

15. On 17 May 1951, several leading opposition members in Parliament criticized the Amendment Bill, particularly its attempt to curtail the right of freedom of speech and expression. According to H.V. Kamath, the Bill was a "curious mixture of revolution and reaction"; the portion seeking to validate zamindari abolition acts was revolutionary while the amendment abridging the right to freedom of speech and expression was reactionary.

16. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, pp. 402-403.

17. Not printed.

17. This letter has been written in haste and is, I am afraid, rather scrappy. You will understand my present predicament.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
19 May, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

In regard to the food situation, I would suggest to you that you should yourself take charge of your food portfolio. In spite of the fact that food is our most important question, it is often dealt with in the States as if it was a secondary portfolio. I think you should make people feel that you are giving it first importance.

Another matter which might be looked into very soon is that your Government should keep the godowns and storage places for foodgrains in good order, and, if necessary, spend some money on this. There is much wastage because of bad storage.

I should like you to examine the feasibility of setting up special summary courts for trial of blackmarketeers and hoarders, etc. The only point of arresting these people is to try them quickly. It is neither fair to them nor to Government to keep them as undertrials for long.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

* A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

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New Delhi
26 May, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

I am sending you with this letter a brief report prepared by a batch of investigators sent by the Delhi School of Economics to Bihar.[1] This is only a summary of their full report[2] which has not been issued yet. Parts of this summary have appeared in the press and you may have seen them. I am sending it to you, however, because I feel that you will be interested in this objective and impartial survey by competent observers.[3]

From this report two facts stand out. Firstly, that owing to a succession of events, including natural disasters as well as some delay on the part of Government in the early stages in dealing with the situation effectively, there was rapid deterioration and a very grave crisis, involving disaster for millions, appeared to be imminent. Secondly, that the Government of India and the Government of Bihar took, at a somewhat later stage, effective steps to meet this crisis, and in fact controlled the situation. The threatened disaster has not only been averted but there is a

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. The six investigators' team started their survey in north Bihar on 23 April and completed it by 5 May 1951.

2. Not printed.

3. The team visited 35 villages in Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga and Purnea districts and met landless labourers, cultivators and prominent non-officials. It found that while serious scarcity conditions prevailed in north Bihar, these had been tackled effectively by the Central and Bihar Governments and the people also had shown "tremendous forebearance despite their lack of purchasing power." The team however felt that the public works started by the State Government were "not sufficient" to solve the problem.

good deal of hope that nothing untoward on a big scale will occur. The report pays handsome tribute to the Government of India and the Government of Bihar in this respect. In particular, it mentions the railway authorities who have helped, with speed and efficiency in transporting foodgrains in very large quantities to Bihar. The report tells us that the whole of the Bihar Government has been geared up for the purpose of meeting this food crisis and most of its officials are "food conscious". A tribute is paid to the Bihar peasant who has suffered so greatly and has lived on the brink of disaster and yet who has not lost his dignity or equanimity. I should like to add my own tribute to the peasantry of Bihar, who have shown in this grave crisis the stuff they are made of.

We have sent vast quantities of foodgrains to Bihar during the last two or three months. We propose to continue doing so during the next few critical months and even later. Our object is not merely to tide over the present crisis, but to lay some secure foundation for the future. The crisis is not passed and will not pass merely because we send enough foodgrains. Therefore, we have to be vigilant and watchful all the time and strive to the utmost of our ability to remove the deeper causes. What has been done thus far gives us hope and confidence and the conviction that we can overcome these major difficulties. As it is, prices of foodgrains are falling in Bihar and I think that this tendency will continue.

The real problem in Bihar today is not the lack of foodgrains but the lack of purchasing power among large sections of the people. This can only be made good by large-scale public works, and I am glad to find that the Bihar Government is paying due attention to this. This should form the true basis of recovery.

Then also we have to give free food to those people who cannot afford to purchase it. In this connection, I made an appeal for gifts of free foodgrains by voluntary contributions and missing a meal a week, etc.[4] The response has been

4. On 1 May 1951.

satisfactory, but we have no figures to judge what it is and what is being done. I think this should be encouraged, but, in doing so, we must not allow unauthorized people to exploit the situation. Instructions have been issued[5] that all such gifts of foodgrains should go to the district magistrate of the district concerned, who will forward them to the affected areas in Bihar or Madras, whichever is considered more convenient. It is for the Provincial Government to keep in touch with these collections and movements, and to report to us. But, in order to save time and keep us fully informed, I suggest that each district magistrate might send a copy of his report to provincial headquarters to the Food Ministry here. We shall then have early information of what is being done.

I have referred to Bihar specially because Bihar has presented us with the gravest problem. But there are other areas in India, notably in Madras, in some of the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh, and elsewhere, where the situation has also been critical. The same approach applies to all these areas. Indeed, in dealing with the situation we must keep the whole of India in view all the time and not forget one part of it by thinking solely of another part.

Any moneys collected for Bihar relief should be sent to me to be credited to a special fund that I have opened for food relief in any part of India. We can buy food with this money and send it wherever it may be needed. It will, of course, be unwise actually to send gifts of food from one scarcity area to another.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. On 11 May 1951.

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New Delhi
2 June, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The press of India has been full of the Constitution Amendment Bill during the last fortnight. In Parliament, all of us have been heavily worked and the strain, after a long session, has been great. As I write to you, the Constitution Amendment Bill is in its last stages. We have passed the principal clauses with overwhelming majorities in the second reading. By this evening, probably, the third reading will also be passed.

2. You will have noticed the very great majorities which have voted for these amendments. Thus far, the largest number voting against any amendment has been 19 as opposed to 228 for the amendment. This was in regard to Clause 2 (Article 19), which has been the cause of the greatest argument and the fiercest controversy.[1] This Article, as you know, deals with freedom of speech and expression. We have been accused of curbing and throttling the press and of trying to behave in an autocratic manner in regard to it. We have met that challenge and, I think, proved to all reasonable satisfaction that there is no such intention or attempt. Nevertheless, the press campaign against these amendments has gone on and some foreign papers

1. Clause 2 of Article 19 was amended by the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951 to introduce several new grounds of restriction on freedom of speech and expression. But in view of the fears expressed by the Opposition in Parliament, the amendment was qualified by addition of the words "reasonable restrictions" to govern all the grounds mentioned in the amendment.

have eagerly taken advantage of this to condemn us. By some odd logic, they have connected this with Kashmir and tried to show how evil our intentions were.

3. I can understand a certain apprehension in the minds of the press and I can appreciate their fighting for their rights, even though those rights have not really been threatened in the least. But I confess that I have been surprised at the vehemence of this opposition. I have not been surprised at some foreign press comments which, progressively, grow more malevolent towards India. This is no doubt due to the fact that we insist on continuing our independent foreign policy and this is not liked. Kashmir comes into the picture because of this, and recently we had some further outbursts in the United Nations Security Council,[2] which showed how far the U.K. and the U.S.A. representatives had moved from any position of non-partisanship and neutrality.

4. The Amendment Bill will be passed.[3] I am glad that there has been this great argument about it in the press and in the country. Such public debates waken up people and force them to think, even though the direction of the thought might not always be the right one. Nothing is worse in a democracy than complacency on the part of a Government or of the people. Unfortunately there is that tendency to complacency and

2. The Security Council met on 29 May 1951 to consider the Pakistan Government's objection to the convening of the Constituent Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir. Sir Gladwyn Jebb, the British delegate, while regretting that the Kashmir question should have again appeared before the Security Council when Frank Graham, the U.N. mediator, was already trying to settle the issue, proposed that the President of the Security Council should urge both sides not to take any steps that would injure the chances of a peaceful settlement. The proposal when put to vote, was approved by 9 votes to nil, with India and the Soviet Union abstaining. The U.S. delegate feared that the Indian Government by convening the Constituent Assembly would "prejudice the future status of Kashmir" and "would leave an explosive irritant which would prevent the establishment of peace and security in South Asia."

3. It was passed by Parliament on 2 June 1951 by a majority of 228 against 20 votes.

passivity, except in the use of strong language. Our Congress politics also tend to be rather unreal. There is a great deal of talk of secession and of prominent persons resigning from the Congress,[4] and yet there is really little public argument on any issue. One would have thought that when such major issues were before the country, there would be fierce debate in the All India Congress Committee such as there used to be in the old days. But the A.I.C.C. meets in a humdrum way and does routine work, and hardly any mention is made in the course of its proceedings of what is really ailing the Congress and the country. There appears to be something wrong about this development. Our politics progressively become of the parlour variety. I hope we shall pull ourselves out of this groove which must be harmful for any healthy development.

5. Coming back to the amendments of the Constitution, these cast a heavy burden upon us. We must not imagine that we can now use all the old acts which, for the moment, had been put out of commission by some judicial pronouncements. We have given many assurances to Parliament and the country about this matter. All the old acts, those applying to the press especially, should be kept, as far as possible, at arm's length. The law of sedition,[5] as such and as applied in the old days, should have no place in our statute book. But what must continue to have a place and be acted upon is the law dealing with the spread of racial and communal hatred. About this, we have to be careful and not prevent the atmosphere to be vitiated more than it already is.

4. On 17 May 1951, Acharya Kripalani, announcing his resignation from the Congress Party, charged that it was "unable to arrest the deterioration in the country." Between 22 and 25 May, Sucheta Kripalani, Sadiq Ali and Ramnarain Singh had also resigned from the Congress.

5. The sedition law was incorporated in the Indian Penal Code in 1870 to be used against "provocative writings or speeches advocating incitement to or abetment of waging war against Her Majesty or Government established by law in British India." Later, two sections were added in 1898 to punish "promotion of enmity between classes" and penalize "statements conducive to public mischief."

6. As has been stated by the Home Minister,[6] it is our intention to put an end to some of the old and out of date enactments and to bring forward a comprehensive measure more in tune with present conditions. Apart from this, I think that we must tackle the problem of the press in a bigger way, as they did in the United Kingdom by appointing a Royal Commission.[7] Our press has grown and is important and we must help it to play its proper part in public affairs. But we must also help it to play it in the right way and prevent wrong tendencies to develop. We talk of the freedom of the press and it is right that we should do so, but progressively our press is controlled by a handful of people who not only own chains of newspapers but also control the news services. This is not a healthy development and should be examined.

7. A grave danger today is the growth of innumerable petty news sheets in various languages, which are often of an exceedingly low standard and indulge in depths of vulgarity. This has little to do with politics although it is often used for political purposes. I have made it clear in Parliament[8] that we shall not come in the way of even the severest political criticism, *either of our internal or external policy. I have also said that we* do not wish to come in the way of the criticism of the policies of foreign countries, subject only to discouraging anything which might lead to a serious situation between us and another country or might even tend towards war. There is at present no law concerning criticism of foreign countries except an out-of-date statute which has no application today. It is not our intention to make any law affecting foreign countries.

6. C. Rajagopalachari, the Home Minister, announced in Parliament on 12 May that the Government contemplated legislation to amend the Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923, the Indian Press (Emergency) Powers Act, 1931, and the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 and to repeal the Indian States (Protection Against Disaffection) Act and the Indian States Protection Act, 1934. The Press Bill was introduced in Parliament on 31 August 1951.

7. The Royal Commission on the Press, appointed in 1947, had submitted its report in 1949.

8. On 31 May 1951.

8. In the course of the debate in Parliament, a great deal was said in favour of allowing Parliament only to make laws in terms of the new amendments. There was a certain distrust and suspicion of the State Governments and Legislatures, not all, of course, but some. There was also the argument that such laws should be uniform throughout India. There was something in these arguments because of the great diversity in the States. As the new Bill is being passed, the authority remains with the States. But as the subjects are concurrent, it is inevitable that any laws made should come up to the Centre for scrutiny and for the avoidance of any conflict between two different pieces of legislation.

9. I would therefore suggest to you to be careful in taking any action as a result of these amendments without reference to us. In particular, any interference with the freedom of the press has to be avoided, except in cases of extreme vulgarity and defamation. In such cases, it is desirable to have recourse to the criminal law. It is not proper to allow false charges to remain unanswered.

10. Much was said about pre-censorship.[9] This is rightly objected to and I think it should not be indulged in under any circumstances.

11. With the passing of this amending legislation, a number of zamindari and land acts have been validated. This is a great gain, for now it will be possible for the States concerned to go ahead with the abolition of the zamindari system and other land reforms. It must be remembered that this present first stage of legislation chiefly concerns itself with the abolition of the zamindari system and of large estates. It is not meant to apply to the relatively small ryot or to the *ryotwari* system as such. In the Punjab, peasant proprietors are called zamindars.

9. For example, Deshbandhu Gupta urged Parliament on 31 May not to ask the editors "to submit their copies for censorship to magistrates who may not know the difference between a leading article and a news item."

This new act does not apply to them as such or to their like elsewhere. But it is clear that in any scheme of land reform, we have to aim at something more than mere abolition of big zamindaris. Already in some States a maximum figure for a holding for a peasant proprietor has been laid down.[10] This may be 50 acres or less. Land reform will not only go in this direction but should also aim at co-operative farming, without which there is little hope of efficient and profitable farming and greater food production. For the present, however, we must concentrate on the immediate issue and that is the abolition of the *jagirdari* and zamindari systems and their like.

12. In some States, the validation by this act of some legislation, which had been declared *ultra vires* by the local High Courts, might well produce a somewhat complicated situation. Some acts might have been done during this interval, after their declaration as *ultra vires*. What then are we to do about them now? I suggest that all these matters should be carefully examined and no sudden and upsetting step taken. I suggest also that the new zamindari abolition acts should be scrutinized to find out what, if any, injustice is done in individual cases. In comprehensive pieces of legislation, it is inevitable that some cases of individual injustice should arise. We cannot help that, but where we can remove this injustice, either by executive action or even by a small amending bill, this might be considered. We shall gladly help you in this so far as we can. We want to avoid continuous litigation. Of course, this is not in our power completely and it is quite likely that even the amending act might be challenged in some way in the courts. If so, we shall meet the challenge. We cannot possibly allow our great social schemes to be held up.

13. We have had prolonged sessions of Parliament and we are all anxious to see the end of this present session. But we have still important work to do. We have to pass finally the

10. The U.P. Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act, 1950, which came into force on 26 January 1951, fixed the limit of land holding at 30 acres.

Representation of the People (No. 2) Bill, which is essential for the coming elections. We have to pass the Part 'C' States Bill, and we have to finalize the delimitation of constituencies. Perhaps we might be able to finish our work by the 10th of this month.[11] There is likely to be another session, though a briefer one, early in August.

14. The food situation in the country has definitely improved. I think we can say with confidence that we have won in our struggle against an impending famine on a large scale. That does not mean, of course, that we are out of the wood and we shall have to face many difficult and even dangerous situations. But we have, in a sense, turned the corner and there is no reason why we should be submerged by famine now, if we are careful and wide awake.

15. Foodgrains are pouring in from various countries and are taxing, to the utmost, our port capacities and transport system. We have already stocked adequately those areas which are likely to be cut off during the monsoon, and we are rushing food to all the other scarcity areas. In Bihar, we have been sending foodgrains at the rate of more than 100,000 tons per month. A feeling of confidence is returning not only in Bihar but in other parts of the country. A positive and welcome sign is the fall in prices of foodgrains in the open market in Bihar.

16. The food aid bills of the U.S. Congress have not been finalized yet, but there seems to be every chance of this being done in the course of the next week or ten days. Once this is done, our food position is assured for the rest of this year. Even without it, we could have struggled through, though with difficulty. We have been helped, as you know, by food supplies from China and the U.S.S.R. We have thus far purchased 400,000 tons of *milo* and rice from China and 100,000 tons of wheat from Russia. We can perhaps get a little more from them, if need arises, but for the present we can hardly receive more because of the limited capacities of our ports.

11. The session of Parliament ended on 9 June 1951.

17. While we must be grateful to all these countries, we should not forget that we owe a great deal to the United Kingdom for helping us to get the necessary shipping. Norway has also made a very generous offer to supply us shipping free of cost. Indeed, we have received various kinds of offers from many countries in the world.

18. Though, from one point of view, the food situation has definitely improved and there is no likelihood of a lack of foodgrains in India, another danger threatens us. This is the unemployment that has grown in rural areas owing to lack of rain in the past and the consequent lack of purchasing power. The only way to remedy this is to have public works on a large scale. Bihar has done well in this respect. In addition, free distribution of food has also taken place over considerable areas. You will remember my appeal for free gifts of foodgrains. This appeal has had a good response in India and, to some extent, in other countries also. Where there is lack of purchasing power, we have to feed people in some other way. The proper way would be to offer work. I am glad that this is more or less realized now. Our success in meeting this grave danger of famine is not only good in itself but is important from many other points of view. It produces confidence in the people and helps to get rid of that feeling of passivity and submission to a blind fate which is so harmful. We can thus make this grave crisis yield rich results, if we only tackle it in the right way. There are sufficient indications today that various States are tackling it properly and therefore there is this return of a spirit of confidence.

19. I have referred to Kashmir earlier in this letter. The Security Council has recently met again to pass yet another extraordinary resolution. I confess that my respect for the Security Council lessens. Our position has been made perfectly clear to them and to the world. We shall abide by every single assurance that we have given to the United Nations, but we will tolerate no interference in our internal affairs in Kashmir or elsewhere. We have not accepted the last resolution of the

Security Council [12] and we shall not implement it. If the new mediator, Mr. Graham, comes here,[13] we shall treat him with courtesy and explain to him anything that he wishes explained. Beyond that, we shall not go. Meanwhile, we shall certainly proceed with the Constituent Assembly in Kashmir.[14] We have said that this Constituent Assembly is not meeting to decide the question of accession of Kashmir state. That is so. But no one can prevent it from expressing any opinion it chooses on any issue.

20. I confess I have been greatly disturbed by the policy adopted by the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments in regard to Kashmir. The speeches delivered by their representatives in the Security Council exhibit an amazing ignorance and lack of understanding of realities. Because Pakistan shouts a great deal and threatens all manner of disasters, therefore the U.K. and the U.S.A. hurry to do something to placate Pakistan, regardless of what is proper and what is not. Needless to say, this will lead them into greater tangles. Basically, this seems to have little to do with Kashmir and is a result of wider world policies. The U.K. has long nursed some kind of an idea of a bloc of Islamic countries in Western Asia, of which it would like to be a kind of patron saint. It looks upon Pakistan as a natural leader of this group, which can serve as a bulwark against any expansionism on the part of the U.S.S.R. This idea of an Islamic bloc has no reality and is only a continuation of an old and out-of-date policy which had never succeeded and will not succeed in the future. Afghanistan obviously is out of it. In Iran, the U.K. Government has got badly entangled in the oil dispute. In the Arab countries, there is continuous ferment and mutual suspicion.

12. See *ante*, p. 386.

13. Arriving in Delhi on 2 July, Graham held discussions with Nehru before proceeding to Srinagar on 8 July to meet Sheikh Abdullah. He revisited Delhi on 23 July after a visit to Karachi on 17 July.

14. Sheikh Abdullah declared on 2 June that elections to the proposed Kashmir Constituent Assembly would be held in September 1951.

21. Our relations with Pakistan continue to be bad. The Pakistan press sets up new records in inflammatory writing and calls for *jehad* against India. The U.N. Security Council shuts its ears and eyes to all this writing and speech in Pakistan. But it pricks up its ears when somebody draws its attention to the Constituent Assembly in Kashmir.

22. A recent significant development in Pakistan has been the formation of what is called the Hindustan Hamara Party,[15] which openly aims at the conquest of India. We need not worry too much about this except as indicating the general mood and policy of some people in Pakistan. No doubt it is the opposite number of the Hindu Mahasabha in India, which also claims to get back Pakistan and unite it with India. This development in Pakistan indicates how one false step leads to another. The Hindu Mahasabha, never noted for much good sense, continues to think and act in a manner which can only surprise intelligent people. But even lack of intelligence can give trouble and can exploit people's passions. The Hindu Mahasabha is not going to conquer Pakistan and the Hindustan Hamara Party will never get an inch of Indian territory. But between the two, they will raise passions and bitterness and that is the danger of the situation.

23. We have recently appointed Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta[16] as our High Commissioner in Pakistan. Dr. Mehta has been functioning as our Ambassador at The Hague. We have chosen him for Pakistan because we attach great importance to our High Commission there and Dr. Mehta has proved himself to be a man of great tact, ability and understanding.

24. In Nepal, the general situation has not been very good and there has been plenty of little trouble in various parts of the country. In Birgunj there was some rioting and looting of Indian shops.[17] We have made it clear to the Nepal

15. Formed at Karachi on 5 May 1951.
16. On 24 May 1951. For b.fn. see Vol.1, p. 416.
17. On 26 May 1951.

Government that this kind of thing must stop. At our request, a Commission of Enquiry is being nominated and one of our officers will be a member of this Commission. It is possible that I might visit Kathmandu in the course of this month, after Parliament is over.

25. An announcement has recently been made of an agreement between China and Tibet.[18] This agreement is more or less what one might have expected in the circumstances. Tibet retains her internal autonomy in a large measure, but China's ultimate control will be very obvious. We do not quite know yet what the position of our Agent or our Missions there will be. It is possible that they might continue, though they can hardly do so as they did in the past.

26. A new popular Ministry has been formed in Pepsu.[19] This Ministry will have to face very grave problems, one of the gravest being the organized hostility of the Akalis. Master Tara Singh, after a relatively quiet period, is again coming out as a preacher of trouble and conflict.

27. In Punjab, the situation has deteriorated in many ways and is at present in a curious tangle.[20] It is unfortunate that such an important and vital province of India should waste its energy in internal political conflict.

28. In Assam, the question of the Nagas has assumed prominence again and some leaders of the Nagas have been

18. The 17-point agreement, signed on 23 May 1951, assured the Tibetans of the right of exercising regional autonomy; confirmed the existing political system, the status, functions and powers of the 13th Dalai Lama and the 9th Pancham Lama and the ranks of the officers; promised freedom of religious beliefs and protection to the monasteries and safeguarded their income; and said there would be no compulsory introduction of reforms in the fields of language, education, agriculture, livestock, industry and commerce.

19. A Congress Government with Col. Raghbir Singh as Chief Minister was formed on 23 May 1951.

20. See *ante*, p. 393.

demanding independence. They are trying to hold a plebiscite for this purpose.[21] It is obvious that the Nagas or any other tribes on our borders cannot have independence. But we are very anxious to give them a large measure of autonomy and to help them in every way, while respecting their traditions and ways of life. I am personally an admirer of the Nagas and I like many of their fine qualities. We have sanctioned recently a special grant of Rs. 10 lakhs for beneficial purposes in Nagaland. In addition, Rs. 30 lakhs have been sanctioned to meet Naga claims for war damages.

29. Weather permitting, I intend going to Kashmir for two days, June 3rd and 4th. The Kashmir National Conference is meeting there and this will enable me to meet many of their prominent workers and will also give me a brief respite from Delhi.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

21. The Naga National Council demanded an independent Naga State.

51

New Delhi
8 June, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

I wrote to you a few days ago suggesting that the food portfolio in your State might be taken over by you.[1] I am afraid I did not make myself quite clear. I did not wish to upset any arrangement[2] that was working satisfactorily. What I was anxious to point out was that the food problem must be given the highest priority, and, as a measure of this, I suggested that the Chief Ministers should take charge of it. Of course, where present arrangements are satisfactory and food is being given this priority, then no change need be made. Even so I would suggest that the Chief Minister might keep in personal touch with the food portfolio.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. See *ante*, item 48.

2. Reacting to Nehru's suggestion, B.G. Kher, Chief Minister of Bombay, said on 4 June that he was already "overburdened" with work and was not keen to take over the food portfolio because "food is complicated subject and requires special knowledge."

52

New Delhi,
13 June, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

We are considering a proposal to appoint a Commission for the press in India.[1] This Commission will, I hope, survey the many problems connected with the press. There is one aspect of this matter in which your Government can help. I should like you to have a note prepared about the growth of highly offensive, slanderous and sometimes indecent writings in the press. If possible cuttings or extracts might be given.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. The Press Commission was appointed on 23 September 1952 to examine the working of the press in India—the present and the future lines of its development, its freedom and control, and all other aspects of its management including monopolies, advertisements and the working conditions of its personnel.

53

New Delhi
15 June, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The Parliamentary session ended at last on the 9th June. As the session proceeded, work became heavier and the strain greater. There was the desire to end it as soon as possible, and yet there was very important work to be done which could not possibly be postponed. So, the leisureliness of the earlier days of the session gave place to intensive activity and Parliament sat in the morning as well as in the afternoon, till late in the evening on many occasions. The People Representation Bill had to be passed and so also the Delimitation of Constituencies, if the general elections were to be held at the end of this year. Both these measures might have taken a much longer time but for the extreme pressure on all members to finish within the allotted date. The Constitution Amendment Bill gave rise to heated and sometimes passionate debate and, I fear, tempers were frayed and hard words said. I am sorry to confess that I fell from grace on one occasion during this debate and used needlessly strong language.[1] But the strain of two weeks of that debate and listening to constant accusations and denunciations was too much for my patience.

2. It was, I think, right that Members of Parliament and the press should be vigilant on an occasion when any of the liberties guaranteed to us by the Constitution were supposed to be in some danger. Nevertheless, I was surprised at the nature and vehemence of the attacks made which appeared to be based not so much on the wording of the Bill but rather on some fancied

1. On 2 June, Nehru's use of the word "lies" was objected to as unparliamentary. Nehru then substituted the word "untruths."

extension of it. The Bill was primarily intended to remove barriers to our legislation for the abolition of the zamindari system. Both from the political and the social points of view, it had become a matter of urgency and high importance that speedy effect should be given to our major policies of land reform. It was an old pledge, oft-repeated; it was also something that had become essential in the context of events. The amendment to Article 19 was, of course, an enabling one and phrased in somewhat wide language. But this was restricted by the word "reasonable" and thus made justiciable. Certain rather far-fetched interpretations of the Constitution by the law courts had placed grave difficulties in our way and it became necessary, therefore, to make the position clear. In doing so, there was no intention on our part to curb the freedom of the press in so far as the expression of any opinion or any opposition was concerned. But, it was true that there had been an increasing tendency in the irresponsible sections of the press to indulge in extreme vulgarity and defamatory writing. Politically, this might have little significance but from the point of any cultural standards, this was most distressing. It is perfectly true that standards cannot be raised by repressive legislation and that other methods have to be used for this purpose. But we live in a precarious and dangerous age and it seemed to us that the safety of the State might perhaps require that Parliament should have the power to deal with any serious situation that might arise.

3. We had to have a written Constitution. That was inevitable in the circumstances, and because we had a written Constitution, we had to have fundamental rights incorporated in it. Nevertheless, a rigid Constitution may well come in the way of change in a transitional age. A Constitution must be held in respect, but if it ceases to represent or comes in the way of the spirit of the age or the powerful urges of the people, then difficulties and conflicts arise. It is wise therefore to have not only stability and fixity of purpose, but also a certain flexibility and pliability in a Constitution.

4. It was not, and is not, our intention to curb the freedom of the press and we do not want State Governments to take advantage of the new amendment in applying some obsolete law. Indeed, one of the first steps that we have to take now is to put an end to some of these obsolete laws, to which reference was frequently made in the course of the debate. None of us wants, for instance, the old sedition law[2] to continue on the statute book. That has a bad history and evokes unpleasant memories. Positively, we shall have to consider what laws to enact which, while ensuring full freedom of expression of the press, should help in keeping up standards and preventing the abuse of that freedom.

5. In regard to the zamindari legislation, we have to go ahead now as speedily as possible. Even so, it is desirable to take every step after full consideration and with as large a measure of co-operation as possible. We cannot, of course, permit any lack of co-operation by a section of the people to stop us from going ahead in this respect. But it will probably make for speed if we consider criticisms and, where they are valid, meet them, either by executive action or even, if necessary, by some amending legislation.

6. It may be taken for granted that the general elections will take place towards the end of the year. The exact dates have not been fixed yet, but will presumably be between November 15 and January 15.[3] These elections are going to be a colossal affair taxing our administrative capacity to the utmost. They will tax also our forbearance and will be a test for all of us. Probably it was the shadow of these coming elections that led to the heated debates in Parliament and in the press. Many people seem to think that our recent legislation was somehow connected with these elections. That was a completely wrong inference and certainly it never occurred to me. Indeed, there

2. See *ante*, p. 405.

3. In fact, they were held from 25 October 1951 to 21 February 1952 and followed by elections to the Upper Houses in the Centre and the States.

could be no greater folly for a Government, such as we are, than to use the repressive apparatus of the State to benefit any party. That itself would rouse antagonism and lose support for that party. What is far more dangerous is the attempt that some ill-disposed persons might make to create deliberate trouble during the elections. I have referred to this previously in my letters to you. Since then we have received further information that some such thing is intended and we have therefore to be prepared to meet any such anti-social challenge. Mostly it is expected from communal groups.

7. I have briefly referred, in some of my previous letters, to the confusion in Punjab. I confess that this has given us much trouble and caused much anxiety, because it appeared to us a bad symptom. The Punjab contains some of the finest human material in India and yet the tragedy of it was that this human material could not pull together. Punjab is important to us in many ways, but its importance has become much greater because now it is one of our vital frontier provinces. We could not afford to see this important area weakened by internal dissension. Every effort was made to bring about some measure of peace and harmony, but unhappily we failed. Recently, the Central Parliamentary Board of the Congress called upon the Chief Minister, Dr. Gopichand Bhargava,[4] to resign and further directed that no Congress Ministry should be formed. As I write this, no further development has taken place, but I have little doubt that the directive of the Congress Parliamentary Board will be carried out. As a consequence of this, it may become necessary to have, what is called, Governor's rule in the province.[5] It is unfortunate that this should be so, but if circumstances compel us, we should not hesitate to do the right thing.

4. (1889-1966). Congressman from the Punjab; Chief Minister of Punjab, 1947-51, and Minister, 1957-64.

5. Gopichand Bhargava resigned on 16 June, and on 20 June Governor's rule was imposed in the Punjab.

8. Certain recent statements made and the continuous shouting for war in Pakistan have brought the Kashmir issue into sudden and rather dangerous prominence again. I visited Srinagar at the beginning of this month[6] and saw for myself not only the general progress made in many directions but also the enthusiasm of the people for the National Conference there which supports the present Government. It was pleasant to see the Valley looking like its old normal self again with plenty of tourists and trade flourishing. The food situation there was definitely better than in most parts of India. Rations were nearly double than what we have given till now in the rest of India. The transport system was working efficiently. Public works have been undertaken and were progressing. There was a general air of progress. I had occasion to speak at a public meeting there and I made it clear what the policy of the Government of India was in regard to the Kashmir issue.[7] Subsequently, I reiterated this at a press conference in Delhi.[8] My statements have not pleased the press[9] or the leaders of Pakistan[10] and there have been violent outbursts there. Open threats of war have been made. Our policy remains what it was, that we will not undertake any military operations in Kashmir or elsewhere unless we are attacked. As you perhaps know, we have reduced our army in the course of the last year by over 52,000 persons. That is a considerable reduction carried out at

6. On 3 and 4 June 1951.

7. On 4 June, Nehru reiterated India's policy in Kashmir and said that the people of Kashmir had every right to make it known "how they felt, what they wanted and how they proposed to work for it." He rejected the idea of arbitration suggested by the Security Council, but expressed the Government's willingness to accept any friendly mediation for arriving at a "just and peaceful settlement." India would not co-operate in any way in the implementation of the resolution of the U.N. Security Council which it had not accepted.

8. On 11 June 1951.

9. On 8 June 1951, *Dawn* described Nehru as the "brigand who has robbed the Kashmiris of their freedom and placed them under the heels of his troops. Here is the plunderer..."

10. On 13 June 1951, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan blamed India for deliberately blocking progress on peaceful lines on the Kashmir issue.

a time when the rest of the world is carrying out vast armament programmes and when Pakistan has striven with all its strength to increase its military power. Our reduction of the army to this extent was somewhat an act of faith. But there are limitations beyond which responsible statesmen cannot go, howsoever they may wish to do so. It was our desire to continue to reduce our army and thus to lessen the heavy burden of expenditure upon it. But we have been forced by circumstances to stay our hands somewhat for the present. In spite of our desire for peace, we cannot afford to take serious risks and we have to be prepared for all contingencies.

9. Recently a conference was held in Delhi between India and Pakistan for the settlement of outstanding financial questions.[11] No substantial results were achieved and all that happened ultimately was to postpone further consideration.

10. I have recently spoken at some length at a press conference about the food situation in India.[12] The Food Minister has also broadcast on this subject.[13] The Food for India Bill has been passed by the U.S. Congress [14] and will probably receive the President's assent in a day or two.[15] The general position is certainly better than it has been and, as I have stated previously, we can say with assurance that there will

11. From 25 to 29 May 1951.

12. On 11 June, Nehru said that India had succeeded in controlling the crisis. The threat of "real famine" had been averted and by 1952 the Government would be able to "strengthen" the people against any such danger in the future.

13. On 12 June 1951.

14. The Bill was passed on 6 and 11 June by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate respectively. The Senate directed the Government to seek as much repayment in terms of strategic materials as possible for the loan of $ 190 million sanctioned to India for purchase of 2 million tons of American wheat.

15. President Truman,signing the Bill on 15 June, stated that grain was being shipped to the Indian ports at the rate of 250,000 tons a month, and appealed to the U.S. voluntary agencies to extend their support to India by supplementing the relief sanctioned by the Congress.

be no famine, as was feared. We have rushed vast quantities of foodgrains to Bihar and the Bihar Government has functioned with efficiency in distributing them, in opening many thousands of fair price shops, in promoting public works so as to add to the purchasing power, and in distributing free food. Madras was the second dangerous area and we propose to tackle it in the same way. While danger of some terrible disaster happening has passed, another danger still confronts us and that is the growth of complacency. The situation will continue to be difficult and will require our utmost vigilance and hard work. It is not enough for us just to prevent large-scale deaths by starvation. We have to build up these great areas in Bihar and Madras and elsewhere and give back strength to those who have been under-nourished for a long time and hope to those who have been on the threshold of despair. Food, now and always, is the primary problem. Nothing else can be given higher priority and it is primarily by the way we deal with the food problem that we will be judged. In this matter, more than ever, co-operation of all the States and the Centre is necessary. The Food Minister has recently announced the restoration of the cut in the food ration.[16] We have done so after due thought and we shall try to make good any deficiency in any State. It was a matter of great distress to us to cut down rations to below nourishment level. This forced many people to go to the black-market and this was not only an encouragement of black-marketing but a severe strain on their slender resources. The restoration of the cut, therefore, from every point of view, is to be welcomed.

11. The response made by the public to my appeal for free food for Bihar and Madras appears to be good from newspaper reports. But we do not receive direct reports, as we should, from each district. It is important that District Magistrates, when reporting to their Governments, should inform the Centre at the same time. Generally speaking, it might not be advantageous to send the actual foodgrains collected either to

16. On 12 June 1951.

Bihar or Madras. Where this can be easily done, they may be sent. But where distances are great, transport difficulties will arise and money will be wasted on freight. It is better in such cases to send the cash value of the grain collected. Out of this, other grains will be purchased on the spot and distributed freely in the name of the donors. These cash contributions should be sent to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

12. I have recently appointed [17] two Parliamentary Secretaries, Shri Satish Chandra [18] and Shri Shyam Nandan Mishra.[19] They will function under me and will work in an honorary capacity. I think it is desirable, not only at the Centre but in the States, to have honorary Parliamentary Secretaries who can help in the work of Government and at the same time gain some training and insight.

13. Recently certain variations have been announced in our cotton policy.[20] I confess to you that it was not without serious thought and misgiving that we agreed to these variations. We agreed to them on the clearest assurance and understanding that they will not be allowed to affect textile prices. It has been our definite policy not to do anything which might, directly or indirectly, raise prices. And yet, under stress of circumstances,

17. On 11 June 1951.

18. (b. 1917). Congressman from U.P.; member, Constituent Assembly, 1948-50; Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, 1951-52; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-57.

19. (b. 1920). Congressman from Bihar; member, Provisional Parliament, 1950-52, Lok Sabha, 1952-62 and 1971-79, Rajya Sabha, 1962-71; Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister, 1951-52; Deputy Minister for Planning, 1954-62; Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, 1969-71; Deputy leader of Janata Party in Lok Sabha, 1977-78; Minister of External Affairs, 1979-80.

20. The Government announced on 13 June 1951 a rise in the basic ceiling price of cotton chiefly to help cultivators obtain better prices for their current stocks. Fixation of price and quality checks were also expected to stimulate the production and improve the quality of cotton. The Government also declared that no increase in the prices of cloth and yarn manufactured from Indian cotton would be allowed during the next year.

some steps have been taken in the past which had that effect. I think that we made a mistake then. It is impossible to have any plan or any progress if prices are rising. We get into a vicious spiral out of which it is difficult to emerge. We shall soon have to consider the Planning Commission's report and I have no doubt that this will lay the greatest stress on a price policy which must be adhered to. Otherwise their schemes might well fail.

14. Another recent announcement[21] has been an increase of Rs. 5/- in the dearness allowance to be paid to government servants drawing Rs. 250/- or less pay per month. There is no doubt that such an increase can be justified and is deserved, and yet it has unfortunate and far-reaching consequences. We gave a great deal of earnest thought to this matter and ultimately decided that, in the balance, it was desirable.

15. There has been much talk recently of inner conflicts in the Congress and of defections from it. That is, of course, a matter of interest and concern to all Congressmen. But it must concern others also because of its larger consequences. At a meeting of the Working Committee held a few days ago, it was decided to convene a meeting of the All India Congress Committee on the 13th of July at Bangalore. This will be preceded by a Working Committee meeting. These meetings have not been convened just to consider the internal situation in the Congress, though that has some importance. They have been convened for a much wider purpose, so that full and earnest thought might be given to the state of the country and the problems that face us. It has been unfortunate that no such constructive thought has been given to the overall picture by the Congress organization. We meet and pass odd resolutions and then go back to our homes. And yet the course of India's recent history has placed a responsibility on the Congress which cannot be shirked. Therefore, the Bangalore meetings have a vital significance not only for the future of the Congress but also

21. On 12 June 1951.

of the country. They might involve a stock taking of the past and important policy decisions for the future. As a Government, we cannot talk in an airy manner about future policies, such as opposition groups often do. We have to be realistic without, I hope, ceasing to be idealistic.

16. There has been a very unfortunate development in Indian politics in recent months. More and more public discussions relate to criticisms and denunciations, often personal. Very seldom is any constructive proposal put forward. If this development is not checked, we shall all sink to the level of personal abuse and political problems will not be properly debated, as they should be, in a democracy. I hope that the coming session of the A.I.C.C. will raise our level higher in this respect and deal with our major problems in an objective and dispassionate way.

17. I need not write to you about the situation in Korea. In a military sense, the United Nations have won some victories.[22] There is much talk of a ceasefire, but I fear there is little hope for it at present and even the military victories do not help in this respect. The conflicts have become deeper as time has gone on. They began with Korea, they included in their scope Formosa, which became even more important, in a sense, than Korea, and now the question of a Japanese peace treaty is likely to make yet another issue a vital one in the Far East.

18. I am going to Nepal tomorrow on a three-day visit,[23] my first to this mountain country, which is our close neighbour. From Nepal I hope to pay a brief visit to Bihar, more especially to some of the scarcity areas there.[24]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

22. U.N. forces checked the offensive launched by China and North Korea on 16 May 1951 and recrossed the 38th parallel at a number of places. Chorwon, Kumhwa and Pyonggang were captured.

23. From 16 to 18 June 1951.

24. On 19 June 1951.

54

New Delhi
25 June, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

My next fortnightly letter to you is likely to be held up as I am going away to Kashmir early tomorrow morning. I shall be in the high mountains, away from Srinagar and cut off from normal communications for a number of days. I return to Delhi on July 4th forenoon. That very day I shall be seeing Mr. Frank Graham, the U.N. representative, on the question of Kashmir.

On the 8th I propose to go to Mysore and Bangalore for the Working Committee and A.I.C.C. meetings. I may address you between the 4th and the 8th. But my letter then is likely to be brief. Hence my desire to write to you now. I shall not deal in this letter with the many problems to which I usually refer in my fortnightly communications. Important developments might take place in the Far-Eastern war in Korea as a consequence of a Soviet statement made two days ago.[1] But it is not clear yet what the result of all this will be. Then, Mr. Graham's visit brings the question of Kashmir to the very forefront and meanwhile Pakistan is adopting its usual tactics of bullying and threatening. The situation vis-a-vis Pakistan is grave.

The meetings of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. in Bangalore have a special significance. They are something more than merely party meetings, because they are likely to influence the country's policy in regard to some matters.

1. On 23 June 1951, the Soviet Union proposed a conference between the belligerents in Korea to discuss a ceasefire and an armistice providing for the mutual withdrawal of forces from the 38th parallel.

This morning's newspapers contain reports of a resolution passed by the All India Newspaper Editors Conference in Bombay.[2] Quite apart from the merits of the question, it seems to me that the whole approach has been vitiated by excitement, passion and a certain degree of hysteria. It would be better for us to await events and not to say or do anything which might complicate the situation any further. It is clear to me that we cannot accept the main contention of the conference, that is, have another amendment or re-amendment of the Constitution, according to their wishes.[3] That is not even physically possible for us. For my part, I think I am as anxious as anyone to preserve freedom of the press and of expression. Any person who reads the newspapers today or reports of some speeches will observe the tremendous latitude that is given to them. To say that we are suppressing the press seems to me to say something which has no basis in fact. As for the fear of future suppression, this can be guarded against when any such attempt is made. We have no desire to make that attempt in so far as the political sphere is concerned.

I am sending you separately a copy of Shri Gorwala's report to the Planning Commission.[4] This report is a thought-provoking document. One may not agree with some of his suggestions or opinions, but there is a good deal in it which

2. The conference held on 23 and 24 June 1951 called on newspapers to suspend publication on 12 July for one day as "a mark of protest against the unwarranted and uncalled for encroachment on freedom of expression."

3. The conference wanted the amendment to Article 19(2) to be "repealed and freedom of expression restored without the qualifications now imported into it."

4. A.D. Gorwala's report on public administration was submitted on 30 April and published on 28 July 1951. The report stated that though the administrative machinery had remained sound, the increasing work load had been adversely affecting the performance of the personnel. It suggested that (1) maintenance of high standards of integrity and efficiency be insisted upon, (2) the machinery be reorganized for ensuring speed, effectiveness and accountability, (3) some basic structural changes be introduced to improve the quality of services, and (4) arrangements made for imparting training to officials, and recruitment through Public Service Commissions to reduce nepotism and patronage.

requires careful consideration. He refers, in particular, to the innumerable charges brought against individual Ministers or officers or departments of Government in newspapers. There is constant talk of "scandals" in Government. A very great deal of this is completely without foundation. Some of it has some basis in fact. A habit has grown in Government departments that these charges can be ignored, because they are generally frivolous or because they are made in irresponsible sheets. This attitude is neither correct nor wise. The allegations are widely read and often believed, because of lack of refutation. Therefore, whenever any such charge is made there should be an immediate enquiry in the department concerned, and a clear statement of facts issued. Where there is an error, it should be acknowledged and set right.

It is also necessary that where defamatory statements are made against Ministers or officers of Government, legal action should be taken. It is not proper to ignore such allegations. It is true that any action for defamation is a difficult affair and often drags on for some time. This inconvenience has to be faced.

I would, therefore, particularly draw your attention to these matters and to request that suitable action should be taken whenever any occasion arises, both in regard to enquiries and public statements and actions for defamation.

We are passing through hard and difficult times both in the world at large and in our own country. We cannot do much in the world, except to wait on events. In India we have obviously a particular responsibility. The situation here, in some ways, has deteriorated. We must come to grips with it by frank and straightforward dealings with the public.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
25 June, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

Some months ago I made a public appeal over the radio for food gifts for Bihar and Madras.[1] Immediately there was a wide response. I received letters and telegrams and the newspapers contained items of news about the people offering foodgrains and collecting them for this purpose. I was personally told of collections in several parts of the Uttar Pradesh, Bombay, etc. In fact, I was very pleased with this response.

Later, it seemed to us that this transport of gift foodgrains would be rather wasteful, as we were in fact sending the maximum quantity by railway to Bihar. We issued specific instructions that all such gift foodgrains should be sent to the District Magistrate concerned and reports should reach us frequently through the provincial Government. In order to avoid delay we further suggested that copies of these reports should be sent by District Magistrates direct to our Food Ministry.

Later we suggested that foodgrains should not normally be sent to Bihar direct. If the distance was short this might be done. But generally, it was better for the provincial Governments to retain those foodgrains and send us the price of them. This money was to be sent direct to me for the special fund I had opened. Foodgrains would be purchased by us from this fund and distributed free on behalf of the donors.

Some months have elapsed and hardly any reports have come to us from the State Governments; nor does any money come.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. On 1 May 1951.

The Kashmir Government is the only Government that has functioned in this behalf and sent us a considerable sum of money for free food for Bihar. All this is a great mystery to me. What is happening to all the foodgrains collected and why do we not get reports or money? Where are all these collections going to and why all this delay? I would like you to let me know immediately because this matter is worrying me greatly.

I am troubled for two reasons. Firstly, that after all this business of appealing and response nothing further is being done. It seems that our energy somehow fades away after that first effort. Also that our work is so dilatory that it seldom produces much result.

Secondly, the fact remains that the need for food relief in Bihar and Madras is tragically important. I do not know how far this is realized. But I have seen the little children in Bihar, all shrunk up by continued under-nourishment, their growth stunted. That picture is before me. I promised them relief and I hoped that relief would flow from all over India. I have waited and waited with very little result, and yet there is no doubt of the public response. What then has happened and where is the bottleneck, physical or psychological? Can we not function in an emergency with some speed and efficiency? These questions assail me, and I am, therefore, writing to you on this subject, so that you might throw some light on this mystery which baffles me.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
7 July, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I sent you a brief letter on the eve of my going away to Kashmir for a week's rest.[1] I returned on the 4th July and early tomorrow morning I am proceeding to Bangalore for the Congress Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. sessions. I am submitting a report to the A.I.C.C.[2] This will be sent to you separately.

2. On my return here, I met Dr. Frank Graham, the U.N. representative for the Kashmir issue. We have had long and informal talks[3] with him and some of his colleagues.[4] It was clear, of course, that we cannot implement the last resolution of the Security Council.[5] As a matter of fact, our talks have not referred to that resolution and what Dr. Graham wanted to know was the general background of this dispute. He is a sincere and earnest man anxious to do what he can to further a settlement. We have to treat him and his colleagues with all courtesy and explain how this problem has developed from its

1. From 26 June to 4 July 1951.

2. On 13 July 1951, Nehru submitted a report reviewing the economic conditions, India's foreign policy since independence, and the objectives of the Congress and the Government. The report also touched upon subjects like the concept of a secular State, the administrative services and increase of population. For full text, see A.M. Zaidi, et. al., (ed), *The Encyclopedia of the Indian National Congress Volume 14: 1951-1954* (New Delhi, 1981), pp. 146-169.

3. On 4 and 5 July 1951.

4. Graham was accompanied by his military adviser, General Jacob Devers, and his principal secretary, P.J. Schmidt.

5. See *ante*, p. 386.

earliest stages and the complicated issues involved in it. I have pointed out to him that, in my opinion, the way the Security Council has handled this matter, especially lately, has been most unfortunate. The Security Council is largely guided, in this matter, by the U.S.A. and the U.K. It might be said that even the U.S.A. Government is considerably influenced by the U.K. Government, which was supposed to be expert in such problems, because of long association with India. A heavy responsibility rests on the U.K. Government for the advice they tendered. It seems to me that the U.K., right from the beginning, started off on the wrong foot and with certain assumptions which were not correct. Many of our difficulties are due to this fact. It is quite possible that we would have been much nearer a solution if the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments had not taken up an attitude which, in our opinion, is not in consonance with facts, law or justice and does not take into consideration the consequences of their own proposals. They have, in fact, encouraged the Pakistan Government to continue to maintain an attitude which cannot possibly lead to a settlement. In spite of the most blatant and amazing war propaganda in Pakistan,[6] not a word has been publicly said about it by either of these Governments or the Security Council. But we are chided for supporting the Constituent Assembly in Kashmir. I confess it passes my comprehension how any impartial authority can act in this way. If, then, we come to the conclusion that the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments are not impartial in this matter, we cannot be blamed. This is not so much a question of bonafides but of wrong premises, wrong procedure and wrong steps taken repeatedly. While undoubtedly both the U.K. and the U.S.A. are anxious for peace and a settlement in Kashmir, they have hindered the coming of a settlement by their own policies.

6. For example, the 'Azad Kashmir' leader, Sardar Mohammed Ibrahim Khan said at Poonch on 30 June that "The people of Azad Kashmir would be compelled to resume *jehad* if India continued her present uncompromising attitude." Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan also stated the same day at Nathiangali that the people of Pakistan would have to find "other effective means" to vindicate the right of the people of Kashmir to decide their fate if Graham failed to bring about a change in the attitude of the Indian Prime Minister.

3. Latterly, as you know, there have been a succession of raids across the ceasefire line.[7] There is no doubt that this is an organized effort to create trouble along that line and generally promote disorder. According to our information, it is also proposed by Pakistan to encourage sabotage within Kashmir. All this is aimed at preventing the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. That Assembly will, of course, be elected, as arranged, in September next. Whether there are any other plans of large-scale conflict, it is difficult to say. But, in view of the constant war propaganda, it is impossible for us to ignore the possibility of such a conflict. We are, therefore, taking all necessary steps in defence. As you know, we have made it clear that there can be no limited war in Kashmir now. If there is an attack in Kashmir, then, quite inevitably, this will mean an extension of that conflict between India and Pakistan. This is a serious matter. We have to avoid this from happening as far as we can and at the same time be prepared for any contingency.

4. We have drawn the attention of the Security Council to these raids across the ceasefire line and to the general war propaganda in Pakistan.[8] We have also asked the U.N. Secretariat to withdraw one of the U.N. observers in Kashmir, who has been behaving in a manner which is highly improper.

5. Dr. Graham and his party are going to Srinagar tomorrow morning for about a week's stay. After that they will proceed to

7. For example, on 23 June 1951, Pakistani intruders crossed the Indian border, killed two soldiers and removed their bodies; these were later recovered with the help of the U.N. observers. Three days later, on the Tithwal-Pakistan border, a Pakistani military picket opened fire on Kashmir home guards.

8. In a letter to the President of the Security Council on 26 June, India drew particular attention to three border incidents in which the Indian troops had suffered casualties. She also referred to the "fanatic war-mongers propaganda" which justified the suspicion that it was part of a planned programme calculated to lead, if unchecked, to the outbreak of hostilities between the two countries. India again drew the attention of the Security Council on 30 June to four more violations of the ceasefire line by the Pakistani troops.

Karachi and probably return to Delhi about the 19th of this month.

6. The war scare in Pakistan, apart from other causes, has led to a sudden and considerable movement of migrants from Eastern Pakistan to West Bengal. This is a reversal of the process that had thus far gone on and it has created a serious problem for us in Calcutta and West Bengal. Conditions in East Bengal, from all reports, have continued to be bad from the point of view of the minority community, who have a continuous sense of oppression. Most middle-class Hindus have already left East Bengal. The present migration concerns the agriculturists and such like people. Our Minister for Rehabilitation [9] has hurried to Calcutta to deal with this new and embarrassing problem.

7. While the situation develops in this way towards some kind of a crisis in the relations of India and Pakistan, and the food problem continues to demand urgent attention from us, the Railwaymen's Federation has decided on a general strike [10] in the second half of August. Merits apart, I must confess that I am deeply grieved at the lack of responsibility shown by the leaders of the Federation. Government has given the most careful consideration to their demands during the past few months and there have been many conferences and consultations with the representatives of the Federation. In spite of our grave financial difficulties, we have sanctioned an addition of Rs. 5 per month as dearness allowance to all government employees

9. Ajit Prasad Jain (1902-1977). Congressman from Saharanpur; member, U.P. Assembly, 1937-39 and 1946-47; member, Constituent Assembly, 1947-50 and Provisional Parliament, 1950-52; Union Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation, 1950-54, and for Food and Agriculture, 1954-59; Governor of Kerala, 1965-67.

10. On 6 July, the General Council of the Federation decided on a countrywide railway strike from 27 August 1951, but was willing to have fresh negotiations.

drawing Rs. 250 per month or less.[11] This means a direct additional charge on central revenues of Rs. 9 crores. Indirectly, a far larger sum is involved. This again affects all State Governments, who are put in an embarrassing position because of the Centre's decision. Many State Governments have protested and objected and, quite rightly, pointed out that such decisions involving their own finances, should not be taken by the Central Government without consultation with them.

8. In spite of all our efforts, a general strike has been resolved upon. What the effect on the food situation will be can well be imagined. It is true that the Railwaymen's Federation has said that they will continue to carry the foodgrains. But it is highly unlikely that this can be done once a strike takes place. Past experience shows us that the strike will lead to violence and possibly to acts of sabotage. The outlook, therefore, is dim. Government cannot give up all its functions, because of this threat of strike. It is Government's duty to try its utmost, by negotiation and conciliation, to find a way out. That duty the. Government will endeavour to perform, but Government has also to carry on the business of the State and in particular to feed those who would otherwise starve. We have, therefore, to do our utmost to carry on with the transport of foodgrains and other vital commodities. The alternative is to surrender to the demand of the Railwaymen at the cost, of course, of the community. No Government can function in this way. It is, therefore, with the greatest regret that we have come to the decision that we must meet this challenge. A strike of this nature, concerning essential services, hits the community hard. In any event, it will cause great suffering and perhaps the Railwaymen themselves will be ultimately among the worst sufferers. What is even worse is that it will create an atmosphere of hatred and violence, which will leave a bad trail behind.

11. All railway employees except those receiving grain shop concessions were to receive the increase with effect from 1 June 1951.

9. We have to deal with the situation firmly. But, at the same time, we must not allow ourselves to do anything which adds to the bitterness of conflict. We cannot fight a part of our own people and, in any event, we have to make friends with them and co-operate with them later. But where a challenge of this kind is made, there is no help for it but to meet it with strength.

10. There continues to be some improvement in both the food and cloth situation. But, I wish to repeat, that this can only be kept up by constant effort. That is why I became deeply distressed by the prospect of a railway strike. The other danger is complacency. There is no room for it.

11. I wrote to you a little while ago expressing my great surprise at the mystery surrounding the gifts of free food, intimation of which I had received previously. We had suggested that instead of the actual foodgrains, the equivalent in money should be sent to me and this would be utilized for free distribution of food in the badly affected areas. To my great surprise, very little has materialized and I just do not know what has happened to these gifts and collections. It does not apply to all States but it does apply to a number of States where there is no doubt that foodgrains collections were made. Kashmir is the only state which has thus far helped in this process. I should like you especially to look into this matter, because help is urgently needed. We would like that help to come not only from India but from our countrymen abroad. We do not want to make a fuss about it or to dramatize famine conditions and the like. But we do wish people to realize that help is greatly needed.

12. In foreign affairs, two events have occupied the headlines in newspapers. The first is the proposal for a ceasefire in Korea and the second is the dispute in Iran about oil in which the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company is involved. Naturally, we have welcomed the proposals for a ceasefire[12] and we earnestly hope

12. On 25 June, India expressed the hope "that something substantial would come out of the present move."

that they will succeed. Nevertheless, I do not myself see any considerable chance of our going towards a settlement there. The difference in approach, outlook and objectives of the opposing parties continues to be very great.[13] Still a ceasefire by itself is an achievement to be welcomed.

13. The Iranian oil dispute is also very far from any kind of a settlement. The Iranian Government has taken up a very strong and unbending attitude and perhaps it may be criticized to some extent.[14] On the other hand, we must always remember that such disputes have long roots in the past. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. does not appear to have shown much wisdom in the past.[15] If they had approached the matter sympathetically a year ago or more, probably no crisis would have arisen now. So far as we are concerned, we have kept out of this dispute. But I have ventured to suggest to the Iranian Government,[16] as well as to the British Government, that it is in the interests of all concerned as well as of world peace to have a peaceful settlement.

13. There were differences between the two sides on accepting the 38th parallel as the ceasefire line People's China was also averse to any international supervision of the armistice and preferred the discussion on the future of Korea being made a part of the general settlement of the East Asian questions.

14. The Iranian Prime Minister announced on 1 July 1951 that only after the British recognition, without reservation, of the nationalization of the oil industry by Iran, would his Government be prepared to discuss payment of compensation to the shareholders. He added that his Government would allow the majority of directors of the company to stay on as foreign technicians only. Iran also refused to accept the decision of the International Court of Justice on the British appeal for grant of interim protection to the Company's assets.

15. On 26 December 1950, the Iranian Government stated that the agreement with the A.I.O.C. would be re-negotiated to obtain higher royalties. The British Government declared on 21 February 1951 that the Supplementary Oil Agreement of 1949 was "fair and reasonable" and, as per the agreement, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company had been allowed concessions till 1993 and therefore any demand for change was illegal.

16. This was conveyed to the Government of Iran on 28 June 1951.

14. Our Education Minister, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, is at present touring in Western Asia. He has been in Turkey and his visit has undoubtedly done much good. He will sign in Ankara a cultural treaty between India and Turkey.[17] Though we are missing him here in India, his tour has been of great benefit to India's relations with other countries in Western Asia. Previous to this tour, he was in London and Paris and led our delegation to the Unesco.

15. Our new Ambassador in Indonesia is Syed Ali Zaheer,[18] who was previously our Ambassador in Iran. The appointment of one of our senior and experienced diplomats to Indonesia indicates the importance we attach to that country. To begin with, our foreign missions developed more in western countries than in eastern. This development was rather spasmodic and largely the result of other countries approaching us. Gradually the centre of gravity of our foreign relations is shifting to Asia. Some of the big Powers, such as the U.K., the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., China and France have naturally an importance of their own. But for us, our neighbour countries, such as Nepal, Burma, Indonesia, Ceylon and Afghanistan have a peculiar importance. Pakistan naturally is of great importance for us, but unfortunately that is the one country with which our relations are not good.

16. Assam has again been afflicted by floods. Partly these are the results of the change in the terrain brought about by last year's earthquake. During this period our engineers were hard at work to prevent some other catastrophe. To some extent,

17. The treaty, signed on 29 June 1951, provided for the exchange of cultural missions, university teachers, scientists and students who wished to receive scholarships. It also provided for imparting training to Government personnel in scientific, technical and industrial institutions.

18.(1896-1983). Prominent Shia Muslim leader of Uttar Pradesh; President, All India Shia Political Conference, 1941 and 1945; Member, Interim Government, 1946; Ambassador to Iran, 1947-51, to Iraq, 1949-51, to Indonesia, June-August 1951; Minister in U.P. Government, 1951-60, and 1962-67.

they made preparations for this, but they could not succeed wholly.

17. During my brief stay in Kashmir I spent several days in trekking on high altitudes from 12,000 to 14,000 feet. Even a few days of living at these altitudes and having strenuous exercise, has done me a great deal of good and I feel much the better for it. I am glad of this because we have heavy work and heavier responsibilities ahead.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
22 July, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

This is a belated letter. As you know, I was away in Bangalore for the meetings of the Congress Working Committee and the All India Congress Committee. Much has happened during the last two weeks. At Bangalore, after prolonged discussion, the Congress election manifesto was adopted.[1] This is an important document not only for Congressmen, who are intimately interested in it, but for all others. It is important what the leading organization in India, which largely controls the central and provincial governments, should say on the subject of our future policies and programmes.

2. This election manifesto is not a vague string of hopes and aspirations but, as far as possible, a realistic approach to the problem of what we want to do and what we can do in the next few years. While the policies are fairly clearly defined and even the specific programmes are indicated, details in regard to the programmes are lacking. It was difficult to fill in details at this stage. It may be possible later to add to this manifesto.

3. This manifesto should serve the purpose of helping people to think on constructive and realistic lines. It may be that some people think that it does not go far enough and others that it

1. The election manifesto, adopted on 14 July 1951, stressed the need for following Mahatma Gandhi's teachings to tone up the moral and ethical basis of the national life; dwelt on the issues of labour, transport, public health, education, foreign policy and Kashmir; advocated a mixed economy; and made a plea for national unity.

goes too far in certain directions.[2] This kind of reaction is not only natural, but, if I may say so, desirable. These varied approaches help in educating the people and making them think of the pros and cons of the programmes put forward. That is the essence of democracy.

4. The real difficulty we have to face often enough is that the personal element and personal criticism overshadows an objective consideration of policies and programmes. If, however, the personal element is left out and even the party element is for the moment forgotten, the actual proposals can be considered on their merits. I think that if this was done, a very large measure of agreement would be arrived at in the country and among the various groups and parties. There could be full co-operation to the extent of that agreement, leaving the other parts of the programme to be argued about or opposed.

5. All this signifies, of course, that we are thinking more of the country's progress than of party advantage in elections. Unfortunately, the general elections are nearing and this fact alone rather queers the pitch, preventing an objective consideration of any problem. All kinds of odd groups grow up in the hope of winning some seats at election time. Many of these groups have really no programmes or policies, except some sentimental slogans which may, to some extent, attract the people. With such groups there is not much room for argument, because they are not used to thinking in terms of economic or like policies. But with other and more serious-minded groups, there should be a good deal of room for common thinking and common action, provided only that we

2. In the debate on 14 July 1951, while some Congressmen felt that the Congress would find it difficult to fight the Communist ideology for lack of ideological content in the manifesto, absence in it of provisions for social justice, ceilings on land holdings and redistribution, and a half-hearted attitude towards controls, others opposed mention of the rights, privileges and duties of the minorities as they were already stated in the Constitution.

can get over the great barrier created by *personal or party* antagonisms.

6. The Planning Commission's preliminary report came out just before the meeting of the A.I.C.C.[3] There was no time to consider it or even to read it. This consideration therefore will have to take place later. But some of the main principles underlying that report were naturally considered independently by the A.I.C.C. and, on the whole, the Congress election manifesto adopted the same line.

7. The Planning Commission's report, I might add, is not a party document, but the appraisal and recommendations of a competent body of men who have given careful thought to this matter for over a year and consulted not only all the State Governments, but many representatives of various groups and parties. Their approach therefore has been strictly non-party and has been conditioned by their desire to get the largest measure of agreement for the plan they might propose. The plan is necessarily limited by our resources and therefore a careful analysis of our actual and potential resources during the next five years has been made. No such analysis can be precise, and any odd development might affect those resources. Nevertheless, planning can only be undertaken on the basis of such estimates which may be reconsidered and varied from time to time. The Planning Commission is firmly of opinion that any really big effort towards the achievement of the objectives they have set down, must involve widespread public co-operation. The plan should be in effect a national plan and

3. The draft outline of the first Five Year Plan signed on 7 July 1951, involving an outlay of rupees 1,493 crores, laid down in order of priorities: (1) the completion of programmes already under way including the rehabilitation of displaced persons, (2) raising the production of food and agriculture largely through increased irrigation, and (3) enlargement of employment opportunities and development of welfare services. It recommended close co-ordination between public and private sectors under central direction and a policy to prevent a further rise in prices until they were brought down by increased production.

something more than a mere party plan, however big the party. To put it differently, the principal planks of the programme should have this large measure of agreement and a desire to work together for their implementation. Some people or groups may wish to go further and they are at perfect liberty to work to that end.

8. The Planning Commission has drawn up what they call a preliminary outline of a Five Year Plan. They have invited criticisms from Government and non-official organizations. After receiving these, they hope to finalize their programme. The important question then arises as to its implementation. We have had too many plans in the past which remained at the planning stage and no machinery has been evolved to implement them. Therefore, the most important aspect for us to consider is the implementation and the machinery for it. The Commission have themselves dealt with this and Government will have to give it full thought. It is clear that the Planning Commission is not something which ceases to be, after submitting the plan. It has to continue as it is, or in some slightly different form.

9. The report of the Planning Commission has already been circulated to some extent. It is being printed now and there will be a larger circulation later. I would invite your Government's careful consideration and scrutiny of this report. Apart from the detailed programmes, we have to be clear in regard to our major policies in the economic sphere. There has been and is a good deal of confusion and all of us, of course, talk vaguely about certain desirable economic objectives. The time has come when we must be clear as to what we can achieve and then try to achieve it. I think that the Planning Commission has rendered a great service by discussing this essential and practical problem and thus drawing the attention of the country to our actual and potential resources. This will, I hope, make everyone in the country think a little more realistically.

10. Soon after my return from Bangalore, I was faced with some resignations of my colleagues in the Cabinet.[4] As has been made clear, these resignations had nothing to do with the governmental policy, but flowed from other considerations. I am glad to say that these resignations were withdrawn at my request.[5] I confess that I feel more and more unhappy at the inclusion of the personal factor in our political discussions. This is perhaps a sign of immaturity, although we are certainly not immature in our general political outlook. I earnestly hope that we shall gradually turn away from this drift.

11. Even before I left Bangalore, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan made public statements about Indian troop movements towards the Pakistan border.[6] He complained not only to us,[7] but also to the U.N. and some friendly countries[8] about this development. You must have followed our exchange of messages.[9] A sudden crisis was precipitated by Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan's statements and in Pakistan there has been a good deal of hysterical talk

4. On 17 July 1951, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai and Ajit Prasad Jain announced their resignations from the Congress and the Cabinet.

5. On 21 July, Kidwai and Jain withdrew their resignations, and announced their support for the Government, but not for the Congress.

6. For example, at a press conference on 15 July 1951, Liaquat Ali Khan charged India of concentrating "ninety per cent of her armed forces on the borders of Pakistan both East and West" which constituted "a grave threat to the security of Pakistan."

7. On 15 July, Liaquat Ali Khan, in a telegram to Nehru, accused India of creating a grave threat to the security of Pakistan and international peace by concentrating her armed forces within an easy striking distance of West Pakistan. A similar complaint was made to the United Nations the next day.

8. On 19 July, the British Government revealed that "the Pakistani Minister for foreign affairs had informed our acting High Commissioner in Karachi verbally of certain movements of Indian forces which the Pakistani Government believed to have taken place."

9. Nehru, in his reply to Liaquat Ali Khan on 17 July, assured him that on no account would India attack Pakistan but would resist any aggression. Liaquat Ali Khan repeated on 19 July the charge of concentration of Indian troops on the Pakistan border and demanded their withdrawal as a prerequisite for maintenance of friendly relations with India.

about war. In other countries also there has been fear that some such thing might take place. So far as we are concerned, I have made it perfectly clear that on no account are we going to attack Pakistan, but that if any part of the territory of the Union of India is attacked by Pakistan forces, we shall resist with all our strength.

12. You know that we have been making earnest attempts to reduce our Army. Last year we brought about an actual reduction of 52,000 personnel and it was our intention to make a further reduction of 100,000 this year. In fact this was our decision and plans were drawn up accordingly. This was a brave decision in view of the world situation and the mounting tension everywhere. We made this decision and we were very anxious to act up to it. But during the past six months or so we were worried over the intensive war preparations of Pakistan, both in the East and West, and, more especially, at the hysterical outbursts of the press there and of leading personalities. There was frequent talk of *jehad* and war on the subject of Kashmir. At first, we did not take this very seriously and could hardly believe that the Pakistan Government would try to solve Indo-Pakistan problems on the field of battle. Nevertheless, the excitement and hysteria seemed to grow in Pakistan. The fact that Jammu and Kashmir state was settling down and obviously making progress under Sheikh Abdullah's Government, was a constant irritant to Pakistan. When the announcement of elections for a Constituent Assembly there was made,[10] this upset the Pakistan authorities completely. They felt that this would strengthen the Kashmir Government very greatly and weaken Pakistan in regard to their Kashmir claim. There was then a tremendous outcry and the U.N. Security Council was invoked.[11] We made it clear that we could not possibly tolerate any interference by any party in our internal arrangements in Kashmir or elsewhere. The elections to the Constituent Assembly would go on.

10. By a proclamation on 30 April 1951 the Jammu and Kashmir Government ordered elections for the Constituent Assembly.

11. See *ante*, p. 464.

13. It came to our knowledge that, apart from the general preparations being made, there was a definite intention to create trouble in Kashmir or elsewhere about the time when Dr. Graham might go back, and more especially when the Constituent Assembly elections were to be held. War talk became intenser.

14. We had to face this situation. With all our intense desire to maintain peace, we could not take the risk of being unprepared for a sudden attack. We had made it clear long ago that a further attack on Kashmir by Pakistan would inevitably result in war between India and Pakistan and military operations could not then be limited to Kashmir. This declaration has, I believe, prevented such an attack. There have recently been some serious raids,[12] possibly preliminary to large-scale operations in the future. We have taken serious objection to these.

15. In these circumstances, we decided to strengthen our defences on the Indo-Pakistan border and certain important troop movements were ordered, so that that frontier should be completely prepared for any attack or emergency. There was and is no intention whatever of our attacking Pakistan in any shape or form. Pakistan armies normally are concentrated not far from the Indian border. Recently, these concentrations have been added to. We are not prepared to withdraw our forces from the border unless it is clear to us that there is no danger of attack on India. I am afraid I am totally unable to accept the verbal assurance of any leader in Pakistan to this effect when constant war propaganda is going on there. The situation is, of course, a serious one and we cannot relax our efforts or grow complacent. At the same time, I rather doubt if there is much danger of war now. This danger is less for two reasons: (1) Pakistan knows very well that we are fully prepared

12. On 9 July, Pakistani troops crossed the ceasefire line in Mendhar sector, and on 12 July, Indian troops on normal patrol duty near Ranbirsinghpura were fired upon by Pakistanis from within the Indian side of the border.

and is not likely to incur the grave risk of attack on us, and (2) the attention of the world has been drawn to this crisis and that itself has a certain deterrent effect. It is possible that the present acute crisis may tone down somewhat after some weeks. But a good deal of tension will still continue because that is based, unfortunately, on certain deeper causes of conflict between India and Pakistan. We can only hope that these basic causes will gradually fade away. Ultimately, it is inevitable that India and Pakistan should come to a full understanding and co-operate together. But this may take some time.

16. I have mentioned in a public statement [13] that the presence of British officers and ex-officers in Pakistan has added to the prevailing tension. I referred, first of all, to the large number of British officers in the service of Pakistan. Many of them are in the defence forces and some occupy important civil posts. The British Government is not directly responsible for them. These officers have a very strong anti-Indian bias, partly because of past history, as many of them were previously in India ranged against us in our struggle for freedom. Their services were dispensed with by India later and they left in no mood of goodwill for India. Pakistan absorbed many of them, including some who were notorious for their activities in India previously. I had in mind also the repeated visits of General Gracey[14] and Field Marshal Auchinleck[15] to both Western and Eastern Pakistan. What they have actually done in Pakistan, I cannot say. But they have visited various military depots and centres and conferred with Pakistani officers. The summer is not normally the season when foreign visitors travel about in India or Pakistan, unless they have some special work to do. Whatever the intentions of these two gentlemen might be, there is no doubt that their visits have had a bad effect in India. General Gracey, it will be remembered, played an important

13. On 16 July 1951.

14. For b. fn. see Vol. 1, p. 250.

15. Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck (1884-1981). Joined Indian Army, 1903; Commander-in-Chief in India, 1941 and 1943-47; Supreme Commander in India and Pakistan, 1947.

role in the Kashmir operations while he was Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army. Early in 1948, he submitted a memorandum to the Pakistan Government, containing an appraisal of the military situation in Kashmir and advising his Government to send regular Pakistan forces into Kashmir. As a matter of fact, Pakistan forces had previously entered Kashmir, but till then this was not considered official. When we knew of General Gracey's memorandum in the summer of 1948, we drew the attention of the U.K. Government to it.[16] In these circumstances, it is not illegitimate for us to take exception to the activities of leading British officers or ex-officers in Pakistan.

17. Though the situation vis-a-vis Pakistan is serious and requires constant vigilance and every necessary preparation on our part, there is absolutely no need for our people to get excited about it, as the Pakistan people have done. The essential need is for us to pull together in the political and other fields and set aside such petty differences as separate us.

18. There is one aspect of the Indo-Pakistan situation to which I drew attention in my last letter to you. This is a reversal of the migration between East and West Bengal. Until about five weeks ago Hindu migrants were going back in some numbers to East Bengal. Since then a much larger number are coming from East Bengal to West. These people are chiefly agriculturists from the Khulna district. This class from this district had not been involved in any previous migration. This creates a new problem and the West Bengal Government have had to face difficult situations. The difficulty is not merely of looking after these migrants but is also due to the fact that the political groups are taking advantage of this new development and making it a political issue.

19. The question of a general strike on the Railways is still undecided and I hope that this strike will not materialize.

16. Nehru wrote to Attlee on 20 December 1948. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1, p. 251.

Government had to issue an ordinance declaring any such or like strike on essential services illegal.[17] It was no pleasure to Government to issue this ordinance. But I do not think any Government would have hesitated to do so when faced with this position. We want to do our utmost to come to terms with the representatives of the railwaymen. But if unfortunately we do not succeed, then we have to meet the challenge and danger of the strike. Not to do so would be a complete surrender and paralysis of Government. At any time a general strike on the Railways brings far-reaching and harmful results. At the present moment, with our food situation as it is, such a strike might bring infinite misery and starvation to many. Recently, the Pakistan development has taken place and we face national danger. In such circumstances, I cannot conceive how reasonable people can advise or participate in a railway strike. Our Railway Minister has again made it clear that he is willing to negotiate with the Railwaymen's Federation on all points other than dearness allowance and those already decided. I earnestly hope that the Railwaymen's Federation, which is meeting now, will decide to give up completely this idea of a general strike.

20. The food position in India, though certainly better than it has been, is still difficult and we have to be constantly on our guard. The difficulty is enhanced by the lack of purchasing power in many areas. The only way to meet this position there is to provide work or doles. Work is always preferable. The monsoon has been erratic and not at all satisfactory in some parts of India. Here in Delhi after an initial downpour early this month, there has been no rain at all. If the rains do not come in parts of northern India, especially during the next week or so, the situation will be very bad.

21. Last night Government issued an ordinance[18] dealing with the controlling interests in companies. Many instances

17. On 11 July 1951.

18. On 21 July 1951.

have recently come to light where changes of management have taken place suddenly and have been followed by dissipation of the resources of the company. Managing agents' allowances have been increased and high commissions have been paid. The whole system of managing agents, etc., has to be reviewed in future and legislation will have to be brought forward before Parliament. Normally we would have waited for that, but even the rumour of such a legislation leads to improper changes being effected previously. Therefore, something had to be done immediately to avoid such transactions and changes. The ordinance is in the nature of a freezing ordinance so as to prevent this happening.

22. I am glad to say that an Indo-Burmese Treaty of Peace and Friendship has been signed.[19] A cultural agreement between India and Turkey was also signed recently in Ankara.[20] Fortunately, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was present then in Ankara and signed on behalf of the Government of India.

23. Maulana Azad returned to Delhi two days ago after his visits to England, France, Turkey and Iran. These visits of his have helped greatly some of these foreign countries in understanding the situation in India. In particular, he had a very warm welcome from the Governments and peoples of Turkey and Iran. For a long time past, Pakistan has been carrying on virulent propaganda against India in these countries. The Maulana's visit dispelled the many falsehoods that have been spread and has resulted in bringing Turkey and Iran closer to India.

19. The treaty signed on 7 July 1951, was intended to develop ties of "perpetual peace and friendship." Both countries promised to respect the independence and rights of each other.

20. See *ante*, p. 439.

24. In Iran the oil dispute continues[21] and, for the present, there is no way out visible. It is possible to criticize the parties concerned. It is, however, necessary to keep in mind the background. That background has been one of long exploitation by foreign interests in Iran. These interests have often interfered with internal politics, controlled governments by their money power and greatly added to corruption in high circles. The people of Iran grew more and more frustrated and angry at the treatment they were receiving. This is a long story and I remember reading a book nearly forty years ago called *The Strangling of Persia*. This was by an American financial adviser, Morgan Shuster,[22] who disclosed a strange tale of the treatment accorded to Iran by the then British and Russian Governments. Since then much has happened and no doubt improvements have taken place. But the old type of officials continue, oblivious of a changing world. I have no doubt that a satisfactory settlement could have been arrived at a year or two ago if these old officials had not been so rigid and out of date in their outlook.

25. A second and a deeper cause is the upheaval in people's minds in colonial and semi-colonial territories. This is indeed one of the dominating features of the world situation today. In various forms and degrees it has applied to India, China, Burma, Indonesia, Indo-China, Iran and the countries of the Middle East. It applies to some extent to Africa also. We see

21. On 9 July 1951, Truman urged the Prime Minister of Iran to abide by the decision of the International Court of Justice and offered the services of Averell Harriman, foreign affairs adviser, for deciding upon the modalities of settlement. On 15 July, Harriman arrived in Teheran. Earlier, the Iranian authorities had on 11 July seized all direct communications of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company at Abadan and threatened that if Britain took the oil dispute to the United Nations, Iran would retaliate by producing documents seized from the A.I.O.C. which proved British interference in her domestic affairs. On 15 July, serious riots occurred in Teheran during an "anti-imperialist" demonstration leading to imposition of martial law.

22. William Morgan Shuster (1877-1960). American lawyer; financial adviser in Iran, 1911-12.

this process at work in various stages in different countries. In India it led to the independence of India and Pakistan and that primary problem was solved. So also in Burma and Indonesia. In China, quite apart from communism, those basic feelings continue. It is not surprising, therefore, that this upheaval and outburst should take place in Iran. No solution which does not deal with these basic causes can be enduring.

26. The present Prime Minister[23] of Iran is popular because the people of Iran, after long and bitter experience, feel that at last they have got a man who cannot be corrupted by money or other favours. The situation is difficult and there can be no doubt that if a peaceful settlement is not arrived at, both the U.K. and Iran will suffer. Iran's economy depends upon oil and if the oil business stops or is not carried on properly, that whole economy is upset. We have, in a friendly way, expressed our earnest desire that a peaceful settlement might be arrived at in conformity with Iranian national claims.

27. In Korea, the ceasefire talks are continuing.[24] They have come up against a big hurdle. Apparently, the Chinese and the North Koreans demand the withdrawal of all foreign armies from Korea. On the U.N. side, it is said that this is a political question which should not be considered during the ceasefire talks. It is possible that this hurdle may be overcome and a ceasefire result. But immediately after we shall have to deal with these major political issues, including the question of China going to the U.N. and the future of Formosa. Therefore, if even a ceasefire comes off, as we hope it will, it should not be assumed that the major difficulties are over.

28. Yet another highly important matter affecting the peace of the Far East is the proposed treaty of peace with Japan. The

23. Muhammad Mossaddeq (1881-1967). Iranian lawyer and politician; member, Majlis (Parliament), 1915-17, 1926-28, 1944-53; Prime Minister, 1951-53.

24. The negotiations at Kaesong went on till 27 July 1953 when an armistice was signed.

U.S.A. and the U.K. have put forward a draft[25] and it is proposed to sign this treaty in San Francisco in September next. We are all, of course, desirous of an early peace treaty with Japan and the recognition of Japan as an independent nation. The question is how best to do it so as not to add to the existing fears and tensions in the Far East. A really satisfactory treaty should have included China and Soviet Russia. At the same time, if China and Soviet Russia are not prepared to sign, it is not fair to hold up peace because of this. But in having any treaty of peace, the fact has to be borne in mind that the door to China and the Soviet having a peace treaty with Japan is not closed. Otherwise, there will be no peace in the Far East.

29. You might be interested to know about recent happenings in East Punjab. After the President's proclamation suspending the Constitution,[26] the Governor was given powers to function there on behalf of the President. There has been a great deal of improvement in the administration and fairly widespread action has been taken against corruption and inefficiency. Over a hundred civil supply officers have been removed from service and a large number of black marketeers have been arrested and are being proceeded against. The general reactions in the Punjab have been very favourable to all the steps that have been taken by the Governor.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

25. The draft treaty issued on 12 July 1951 stated that all Allied occupation forces would be withdrawn, but non-Japanese forces could be stationed under bilateral and multilateral treaties. Japan was not to pay reparations but her assets abroad could be retained by the Allied Powers. Japan's sovereignty was restored but she was to recognize independent Korea, and renounce all rights on Formosa and the Pescadores, the Kurile islands, that part of Sakhalin islands which was under Japanese occupation, the Pacific territories governed under the League of Nations, the Antarctic areas and the Spratly and Paracel islands.

26. On 20 June 1951.

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New Delhi
1 August, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

In my last letter to you, I referred to the growing tension, almost amounting to a crisis, in Indo-Pakistan relations. Since then, there has been an exchange of telegrams between Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan and me.[1] These telegrams have been published in the newspapers and you must have seen them. In a sense, the critical situation has worsened because of the continuous warlike propaganda in Pakistan and their blackouts,[2] civil defence measures,[3] and the like.[4] On the other hand, it may be said to have rather stabilized itself, as people get used to a repetition of threats and hysterical utterances. I think it is generally recognized, even by those who have been unfriendly to us in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, that Pakistan has overshot the mark and its attention has been

1. In their telegrams of 23 and 26 July, Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan maintained that they were observing the terms of the Delhi Agreement. On 29 July, Nehru referred to the troop movements on the border and the war hysteria in Pakistan which had compelled India to take precautionary measures. India would stand by her pledge to Kashmir, but Pakistan should withdraw her forces as per U.N.C.I.P. resolutions. To defuse the situation, war propaganda should be stopped and the proposed declaration against invasion should also include invasion of Kashmir.

2. Trial black-outs were carried out in Lahore, Rawalpindi and Karachi between 23 July and 5 August 1951.

3. By an ordinance promulgated on 26 July, the Pakistan Government assumed powers to prepare civil defence and take other precautionary measures including requisitioning of property.

4. By a Presidential order of 27 July, four battalions of Pakistan National Guards were incorporated into the Pakistan army.

drawn to this.[5] The patent contrast of warlike Pakistan and peaceful India is too obvious not to be noticed by even the casual observer. Gradually it is sinking into the consciousness of outside observers that there is something wrong about the tumult and shouting in Pakistan.

2. But the fact remains that the situation is serious and we must be vigilant all the time and not be caught unawares. I think there is little chance of that happening and it is because of this that I think the chances of war taking place are not great. In Pakistan, there is a full realization that we are earnest and there is no bluff about what we have done or said. We have been studiously moderate in our utterances, or at any rate, most of us, but there has been no lack of firmness about what we have said. We have sometimes been criticized for not taking special measures in regard to what is called civil defence. That is so. Civil defence measures become necessary in case of war, although some of them adopted in England at the time of the last war are inapplicable or of not much use in India in present circumstances. There is far too great a tendency for people to think in terms of imitating what was done in Western countries during the Great War. But some such measures certainly would be necessary if war came. We have to decide whether we should take them as a precaution now or avoid them. I am quite clear that we should do nothing which leads to public excitement and an expectation of war. The harm that does is far greater than the possible good it might do. It interferes with the normal life of the community, with trade and commerce, and tends to produce a psychosis, which Pakistan has been deliberately encouraging and which we wish to avoid. If, unfortunately, necessity drives us to some such recourse, we shall undoubtedly have to take such measures and take them speedily and efficiently. But for the present, all that is necessary is to be clear in our minds as to what may be required in an emergency, so

5. On 30 July, Krishna Menon reported from London that "Pakistan has been repeatedly told that they are playing with fire and that the war and *jehad* talk is highly injurious."

that we might be prepared for it. No public steps should be taken.

3. Apart from defence preparations, involving the army, etc., the most important element in a conflict is the morale of the people. I am happy to tell you that the morale of our people, all over northern India, is excellent. There is not the least sign of panic or even of obvious excitement. This is not due to a lack of appreciation of the seriousness of the situation, but rather to the wish to avoid war, and to a feeling of calm strength that if danger comes, it will be faced without flinching and with confidence. Three days ago, I addressed a public meeting in Delhi. That was one of the most exhilarating experiences I have had. It was, of course, an open air meeting and a vast crowd, estimated at 200,000, had gathered. Throughout the meeting, it rained continuously, and sometimes heavily. And yet, that tremendous audience not only stood the rain but was cheerful throughout. I spoke to them about this serious situation and told them all what Pakistan was saying and doing and of the steps we had taken. I dealt with the situation as objectively and calmly as I could and I watched carefully the reaction of that great crowd. I have a sense of crowds, and of mass feeling, and the reactions I got, pleased me. We have heard a great deal during past months about our internal troubles and disintegrating forces and the like in our public life. And yet, when I saw that vast multitude under the most unfavourable circumstances, I had the consciousness of buoyant strength without any bluster. My comparison of the 'clenched fist'[6] of Pakistan with the *Asoka Chakra*, our symbol of peace and righteousness, evoked the loudest applause.

4. I would therefore suggest to you to deal with the present situation in a way which demonstrates to the people that we are not in the slightest upset by it and that we are going to carry on our work in the normal way, and in effect better than the

6. On 27 July, Liaquat Ali Khan speaking at Karachi on 'Defence Day', gave the symbol of 'clenched fist' to the Pakistan people.

normal. We should, of course, keep wide awake and follow events carefully. We should have in our minds what we should do in case any particular emergency arises. But we should not do anything which might lead the public to think that war is on the doorstep. I do not, in fact, think that it is anywhere near. But I cannot and you cannot relax our vigilance.

5. As usual, we have received, and I suppose Pakistan has received also, communications from the U.K. and U.S.A. Governments, pointing out to us the dangers of the situation and stressing the need for peace. Good advice is always welcome, though sometimes it may not be appropriate. Our desire for peace with Pakistan is far greater than that of any other country not only because of our entire policy but also because it concerns us most. Perhaps this critical situation between India and Pakistan would not have arisen but for the policies pursued by the U.K. and U.S.A. Governments in regard to the Kashmir dispute. They have consistently encouraged the intransigence of Pakistan. Is it surprising then that Pakistan, so encouraged, has gone far in the wrong direction?

6. Nothing has surprised me so much during the past months or even years than the deliberate policy pursued by the U.K. and U.S.A. Governments, in the Security Council of the U.N. and elsewhere, in regard to Kashmir. I hope I am not entirely incapable of taking an objective view of the situation. I have tried to do so and I cannot understand why some foreign countries should be so hostile to us in this matter. There must be some basic cause for it, which has little relation to the merits of the dispute. It is clear that long ago the U.K. and U.S.A. Governments came to the conclusion that Kashmir must go to Pakistan. That had nothing to do with the merits of the case. Having come to that conclusion, naturally the policy they have pursued has been meant to further that objective. Why did they start with this premise? If we trace this, perhaps we will have to go back to pre-partition days when the British Government encouraged the Muslim League and separatism in

India. We shall also have to go back and try to understand the policy of the U.K., which led them to support feudal and reactionary regimes in the Middle East and sometimes even favour the idea of Pan-Islamism or an Islamic bloc. In the old days, this was against the Czarist Russia. Later, Communist Russia became a major danger. Of course, there was oil in the Middle East and the routes to India and the Far East had to be protected. After the First World War, the whole of the vast area from Afghanistan to Turkey was more or less under British occupation and Mr. Winston Churchill even suggested the creation of a Middle Eastern Empire. But other developments took place. There was the new Soviet Russia, weak and facing a civil war, but nonetheless a power, with a new kind of strength. Kamal Ataturk [7] drove out the allied occupation forces from Turkey and later defeated the Greek Army, which was supported by the British. Raza Shah Pahlavi [8] became dominant in Iran. In the Arab countries, all kinds of new situations arose. Iraq remained largely under British control.

7. Even so, the attempts to keep some kind of control of the Middle Eastern regions continued. It was little realized by the diplomats and the policy-makers of Western countries that new and powerful forces were rising all over Asia and that they could not be dealt with in the old way, either by military pressure or financial inducement. It seems astonishing how lacking in awareness Western nations have been and, to some extent, even are today, about these forces. They seem to think that their analysis of the situation is complete when they talk of the Communist danger which must be met.[9] Undoubtedly,

7. Mustafa Kamal Pasha Ataturk (1880-1938). Turkish General who drove the Greek army out of Smyrna (Iznier); founded Republic in 1923 after Turkey's defeat in the First World War; became the first President and modernized Turkey.

8. (1877-1944). Prime Minister of Iran (Persia), 1923-25; Shah (King) of Iran, 1925-41.

9. On 20 July, George M. McGhee, Assistant Secretary of State, told the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives that the United States proposed to spend $ 540 million in military and economic aid to the West Asia and Africa in view of the Soviet intentions to dominate that region.

Communist expansion must be met. But it cannot be met adequately with the support of reactionary and feudal regimes. It is there that European and American policies have failed. The U.S. supported the reactionary Kuomintang regime in China and came to grief. Even now they support the remnants of that regime in Formosa.

8. It is in this context of Middle Eastern policy that one can fit in the old British policy in India of encouraging separatism and ultimately building up of Pakistan. Pakistan was to become a part of this Middle Eastern Islamic bloc. It was not realized that while Islam is undoubtedly a great force, the new nationalisms of Asian countries were, on the political plane, a much greater force. India was and is considered very important, as it undoubtedly is. But there was some uncertainty about India's policy, as it followed an independent line of its own. Pakistan, for all its loud talk, was a much more pliable instrument and easy to control. Hence Pakistan was to be the centre of this Islamic bloc of nations in western Asia and it was through Pakistan that this bloc could be most easily controlled. It became important therefore to build up Pakistan for this purpose, both internally and externally. The vast and well-established publicity machine of the U.K. worked to this end. Pakistan publicity had little to do because others did its work much more efficiently and thoroughly. All it had to do was to make clear that it would fit in with the general policies laid down for it. Inside Pakistan, there continued, both in the defence forces and the civil service, a considerable number of British officers, nearly all of them of the old colonial type. They influenced policies there and even day to day activities.

9. If Pakistan had to be built up, then it became necessary that Kashmir should go to Pakistan both to give it additional strength and so that the borderland touching the Soviet Union should be under control. Hence the basic policy of the U.K. in regard to Pakistan. This flows from the old policy and it is easy to justify it on the simple plea that Kashmir is predominantly Muslim and therefore it should go to Pakistan.

10. The U.S.A. did not have this background of Middle Eastern and Indian policies of the U.K. But, in such matters, they followed the U.K. advice and lead. This was all the more easy because they felt with the U.K., and perhaps even more so, that Pakistan was easy to keep within their sphere of influence in regard to wider policies, while India was an uncertain and possibly not reliable quantity in this regard. Because of this also, both the U.K. and the U.S.A. have been irritated with Afghanistan, which does not fit in with their ideas of how Pakistan should develop, and have continually brought pressure to bear upon it to fall in line with Pakistan. Afghanistan has refused to do so and continues to be hostile to Pakistan because of the Pakhtoonistan issue.

11. This whole policy which the U.K. and the U.S.A. have pursued in varying degrees in Asia may meet with some success in some places and on some occasions. But it is basically misconceived, because it fails to take into consideration the major factor, that is the new urges that move masses of men and women in the different countries of Asia. In the Far East this policy has led to an impasse; in Iran it has created great difficulties for the U.K. As I pointed out to you in my last letter, the oil dispute in Iran is but the outward manifestation of something much bigger.

12. I hope that the analysis I have made of the past and present policies will help you a little to understand the situation in relation to India, and especially Kashmir. We are often blamed for our propaganda and some of the criticism is no doubt justified. We are, of course, at the same time told to economize and not to waste money in foreign countries. We cannot have it both ways. As a matter of fact, Pakistan throws money about in foreign countries on its propaganda and uses many methods which we do not consider desirable. But, in the main, they have the benefit of vast propaganda machines of other countries which we do not and cannot have, if we pursue our independent policy. This is, of course, a simplified way of describing a complicated situation. In the final analysis,

however, it is thoroughly understood in the U.K. as well as in the U.S.A. that India counts far more than Pakistan.

13. There is another aspect of the situation which is perhaps not kept in mind by us as much as it ought to be. Our frequent declarations that we are a secular State are appreciated abroad and raise our credit. But they are not wholly believed in and it is often thought that a few leading personalities represent this viewpoint and not the mass of the people or even many important organizations. The picture of India that most people abroad have had is that of a caste-ridden country split up into innumerable social compartments with large numbers of untouchables and the like. Our social habits are not understood and are disliked. We do not mix easily with people. We do not generally eat and drink with them, as Pakistanis do. And so there is a general feeling of dislike and distaste in regard to India. It is little realized here what great injury to our credit abroad is done by the communal organizations of India, because they represent just the things which a Western mind dislikes intensely and cannot understand. When these communal organizations attack openly the secular idea of the State, this is supposed to represent a prevailing sentiment among Hindus especially and all our protestations about the secular State fail to convince. The recent inauguration of the Somnath temple,[10] with pomp and ceremony, has created a very bad impression abroad about India and her professions. Pakistan, of course, has taken full advantage of this and made it one of the principal planks of its propaganda.[11]

14. Thus, in our contacts and propaganda abroad, we have to contend against a positive, widespread and well-organized propaganda machine of great countries working for Pakistan and often against us; and on the other hand, in negative dislike

10. See *ante*, p. 388.

11. For example, on 12 May 1951, a resolution was passed at a public meeting in Karachi denouncing the renovations at the Somnath temple as an insult to Muslims and an act of aggression against Pakistan "as Junagadh is part of Pakistan's territory."

and distaste for the social habits and many things that are observed in India. In addition to this, the money we spend in propaganda is strictly limited and trained persons with a full appreciation of historical trends and political issues are also not easy to find. Propaganda abroad is not merely a question of an efficient newspaperman but requires, in addition, other qualities.

15. I have mentioned the disabilities we suffer from abroad. There are advantages also and they are by no means negligible. The story of India's long struggle for freedom under Gandhiji has powerfully impressed the world and, more especially, the Asian countries as well as the people of Africa. That tradition and Gandhiji's name are tremendous assets. In the eyes of large numbers of people we have stood for certain principles and we have adopted a certain technique and policy which brought us success. Because of that, they still look to our country for a certain kind of lead and for advice based on experience. In the past, India was the chief example of the new colonialism and it was partly because of India that other countries also suffered subjection, because they lay on the route to India. Then India became a symbol of a struggle for freedom against that colonialism, carried on against great odds, without stooping to objectionable methods. In many ways we influenced the nationalist movements of other countries and they looked up to us. They still do so, to some extent. The independent policy that we have pursued in foreign affairs has helped to maintain that old tradition and to add to our credit abroad. Also the mere fact of our great potential resources, our geographical position and the belief that we are destined to play an important role and perhaps make some difference in world affairs, adds to the respect which comes to us.

16. All these are valuable assets provided only that we ourselves maintain that old tradition, adhere to our principles and our independent policies. But it is not merely enough to repeat old truths and slogans. We have to live up to them. This is the great test for us. Unfortunately there are many people in

the country who repeat those old principles and act in opposition to them. There are still others who denounce those principles and openly proclaim something entirely different. Whatever harm communalism may do in India, and it can do great harm because it is a disruptive and degrading force, the harm it does to India in other countries is tremendous. Immediately the high edifice that we have built up in their eyes begins to crack up and totter and we appear to them as narrow-minded bigots following social customs which nobody in the world understands or appreciates. We talk of high philosophies and our ancient greatness but act in narrow grooves and show intolerance to our neighbour. These are basic questions for us to keep in mind, for our future depends on the answer that we give to them.

17. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad came back from his foreign tour a week ago. Apart from visiting England and leading our Unesco delegation in Paris, he visited Turkey and Iran. In both of these countries he received a cordial welcome and his very presence there helped to remove many of the misconceptions that had been spread by our opponents. This visit shows that if a right approach is made by the right person, substantial results follow.

18. Communal organizations, old and new, are functioning with some vigour nowadays, probably because of the coming elections. They appear to have ample funds. There are enough reactionary and anti-social elements to provide them with these funds and they can always exploit the name of religion and ancient culture. Essentially their appeal is more dangerous for India's future, because it is insidious, than many other appeals, coming from obviously dangerous quarters. Whenever the tension with Pakistan increases, these communal organizations take advantage of this to preach their misguided views. As the Muslim League did before the partition, they preach the gospel of hatred and separatism. They go about saying continually that Muslims are not to be trusted and thus creating popular feelings against them. There may be Muslims who cannot be

trusted. But I am quite sure that in the case of a conflict with Pakistan, the dangerous element will be the communal Hindu element which will then try to act up to its declared policies against the minorities. Therefore, we have to be particularly careful of the activities of the communal organizations at such a critical juncture.

19. You have heard that the proposed Japanese peace treaty has now taken some shape. After mutual consultations, the U.S.A. and the U.K. have presented a joint draft. India, of course, is anxious that a treaty of peace should be signed with Japan and that Japan should function as a free and independent country. We are anxious even more that there should be peace in the Far East. We have viewed this draft treaty therefore from this point of view. Some of the minor amendments suggested by us have been accepted. But I regret to say that there has not been much difference in the basic approach to the problem. We have again pressed for a change,[12] but it seems unlikely that our suggestions will be accepted at this stage. They were not approved of previously. The result is likely to be that we shall not join this multilateral treaty, as we cannot concur in some of its provisions, though they do not affect us directly. In such an event, we would prefer to have a simple bilateral treaty with Japan.

20. The test we apply to this draft treaty is: does it ease the tension in the Far East or will it add to it? It is clear that there can be no peace in that region unless the countries principally concerned are parties to it. Among these countries are obviously China and the U.S.S.R. Any peace treaty that ignores

12. In her reply to the United States on 28 July 1951, India stated that if the objective of the treaty was to relieve tension in East Asia, it could not be achieved by excluding People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union from the peace settlement with Japan. India was also critical of the proposed continuance of the U.S. trusteeship of the Bonin and Ryukyus Islands, without returning them to Japan, the failure to restore Taiwan to China, and the presence of foreign troops in Japan after the occupation had ended.

them or shuts the door to them will not lead to peace. The proposal to continue foreign bases and foreign troops in Japan not only means a diminution of Japanese sovereignty but is bound to be considered as a direct threat to China, just as the support of the Formosan Government of Chiang Kai-shek is considered a threat. We recognized the People's Government of China more than a year and a half ago and our relations with it are friendly. We can hardly encourage a move, which is directly hostile to China and which later may lead to indirect association with the Formosan Government, which we do not recognize.

21. International questions are being judged more and more from the military point of view. There is the vital question of the rearmament of Germany and now the rearmament of Japan is being discussed. The old military groups in these countries, against which so many voices were raised in the past and a great war fought, may again come back to power. Spain, which has long been in Europe a symbol of a fascist regime, is now being helped by the U.S.A. so that Spanish bases might be available in case of war.[13] All this may be justified from the narrow point of view of military exigencies. But all those who grew up in the old traditions against fascism and all that this implies are naturally greatly disturbed by these new developments.

22. In Korea, the ceasefire talks are continuing and appear to have reached a stage of semi-deadlock on the question of the ceasefire line. I think that, some time or other, this deadlock will be resolved because both parties are thoroughly tired of this war and want peace at least for the time being. But even if a ceasefire is agreed to, that does not mean a settlement. It is only then that the major political problems will come up for discussion. These involve not only Korea's future, but that of

13. It was reported on 18 July that Spain had been assured that if she agreed to allow the United States to use her bases in Spain and Morocco, the United States would sanction economic aid for modernization of the Spanish army and permit her to become a member of NATO despite French and *British opposition.*

Formosa, and of China's entry into the U.N., and now the Japanese treaty and all that it implies.

23. I had a visit some days ago from the Foreign Minister of Burma.[14] He came specially to discuss the terms of the Japanese peace treaty. We were largely in agreement in our views on this subject. Burma, however, is very anxious to get reparations from Japan because she suffered greatly from the Japanese occupation. We can understand that desire, though I doubt very much if any reparations are available or can be obtained. So far as we are concerned, we had not asked for any reparations.

24. There has been frequent reference in the press recently to resignations from the Central Cabinet.[15] I confess I have been greatly troubled over this matter, for the two persons concerned have been valuable colleagues who have fully justified their membership of Government. There was no question of a difference of opinion in regard to governmental policy. Difficulties arose about other matters relating to the National Congress. I do not propose to say anything about this subject here because you will probably soon see some statements in the press which will explain the present position. That position only indirectly affects the Government. Essentially it is a question of the future of the Congress. This is not only of interest to Congressmen but to everybody in India, because the role of the Congress has been great.

14. Sao Hkhun Hkio met Nehru on 27 July 1951.

15. R.A. Kidwai and A.P. Jain after withdrawing on 21 July, on Nehru's insistence, their resignations from the Cabinet, publicly criticized the views and style of functioning of Purushottam Das Tandon, the President of the Congress. Their statement issued on 22 July was sharply attacked by the supporters of Tandon who demanded an assurance from the Prime Minister that members of the Cabinet would not be permitted to act in this manner. As Nehru agreed that it was improper for any member of the Cabinet to criticize the Congress President, Kidwai submitted his resignation on 30 July, which was accepted on 2 August 1951.

25. The next session of Parliament begins on Monday next, August 6th. This is the last session before the elections. It has heavy business before it, some of which is of importance and must be passed during the session. Probably this session will last for about two months.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
9 August, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

The Indo-Pakistan situation shows no signs of improvement. The most that can be said is that it has not grown any worse, but it is bad enough. On the Pakistan side, feverish preparations for war are taking place. Whether there is war or not, depends on many factors, among them the attitude of the U.K. and the U.S.A. Governments. I do not mean to say that either of these Governments want war. I do not think they do. But I am quite sure that if they make it perfectly clear to Pakistan that it must not indulge in its warlike activities, then there would be no war, because Pakistan has been depending a great deal on such direct or indirect support it might get from them. A great part of the press in these countries writes in favour of Pakistan and that by itself can almost be described as incitement to war.[1]

Considering this question logically, I do not consider war likely. But logic does not explain everything and, in any event, we cannot base our activities on pure logic. Logic would not

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. For example, on 19 July, *The Daily Telegraph* in its editorial commented that "Whereas Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan appears to act as a restraining influence upon the more bellicose elements in Pakistan, Mr. Nehru's vehemence in maintaining India's claims in Kashmir has certainly played a large part in keeping the question unpleasantly alive in Indian opinion." It further alleged that Nehru's actions could be explained in the light of approaching elections and cautioned that "it would be tragic if this domestic situation were to tempt Mr. Nehru into fresh anti-Pakistani jingoism with results far more serious than the gaining or losing of votes." The *Manchester Guardian*, on 19 July, said, that "India has made a deplorable impression by its troop movements against Pakistan and all the more so because of its denials."

explain the spate of propaganda, full of hatred and falsehood, that issues from Pakistan.

Because of this grave situation, many people are asking us why we are not taking measures for civil defence.[2] I have consistently opposed any such measures which have become quite common in Pakistan. I still hold to that opinion. I do so, not from any feeling of complacency and not because I wish to take risks. On a clear analysis of the situation, I am convinced that by our taking these measures, we shall gain very little indeed and we might lose a lot. Most people who talk about civil defence think in terms of what was done in the warring countries during the last great War. That is not a good comparison, because there the air warfare was on a terrific scale. In India or Pakistan it can only be on a very moderate scale, because of the smallness of our resources. In comparison, our resources are greater than that of Pakistan in the air, on land and on the sea. Nevertheless, our air arms are relatively small.

When civil defence is talked about, it is usually in connection with two matters: (1) inner border defence, (2) distant internal defence from air attack.

In the nature of things, air attacks cannot be on a major scale. At the most there might be some small-scale bombing. The best defence is in the air, apart from anti-aircraft guns. The other defence, that is civil defence on the ground, can be built up rapidly. It will not really make much difference because of the small-scale bombing. To think in terms of internal air defence and big trenches, air shelters, fire guards, etc., is to waste our energy and resources on something that is relatively unimportant in the scheme of things, but which

2. For example, T.M. Zariff of All India Muslim Convention on 24 July, *Amrit Bazar Patrika* in its editorial of 25 July, the provincial conference of Jan Sangh at Calcutta on 29 July, and S.P. Mookerjee in his speech at Bongaon on 1 August 1951.

creates a great excitement, war fever, fear and, to some extent, panic. In the balance, this is not to our advantage. The chief requisite for civil defence is morale and lack of fear. If we make people afraid to begin with, we are, in that measure, weakened. The extensive preparation for civil defence in Pakistan has, on the whole, spread this war fever among the people and made them more war-minded and, on the other hand, it has spread fear. A very large proportion of the population of Lahore has left the city.

As regards border defence, inevitably this is the principal responsibility of the army plus the air arm. But behind the armed forces, civilians certainly have a role to play in many ways. To some extent, we have given thought to this even in the past. Again we have to balance various factors. To lay stress on civil defence near the border is to create a feeling of semi-panic and many people may go away. As a matter of fact, our strongest defence is the steadiness of the people at the border and I am glad to say that, from all reports, their steadiness and morale are excellent. We have even discouraged officers' families from coming away from the border.

Therefore, it seems to me that those people who talk so loudly about civil defence and preparations, etc., have not given careful thought and proceed on certain understandable reactions. The whole psychology of defence in this context, is nearly allied to an expectation of an invasion and partial defeat either on land or in the air. I do not wish to encourage this psychology and there is no adequate reason to do so either.

Sometimes it is said that there might be bad elements among the Muslims who might give trouble. That is quite possible, but I think it is highly unlikely that any major trouble will come from that direction. We should be careful of course in regard to strategic areas or vital spots.

I think it is much more likely that trouble may come from Hindu or Sikh communal elements. They would like to take

advantage of the occasion to misbehave towards Muslims. If any such thing occurs, it will have very bad consequences and will weaken us. Therefore, this kind of thing must not be allowed to happen. This is of major importance and we must give full protection to our minorities. This means also that we must not permit any propaganda on the part of Hindu or Sikh communal organizations, which is on a par with Pakistan propaganda on the other side. There have been some recent instances of this where, lacking originality, the Hindu Mahasabha people have tried to imitate the Pakistanis. They did not succeed to any extent. But it is quite possible that if we are unwary and some incidents happen, the communal elements might take advantage of them. I would, therefore, specially request you to keep this in mind.

Having said all this and discouraged you from taking any civil defence measures or the like, I have to ask you, at the same time, to be ready for any emergency. That is to say that your Government should secretly think out what should be done in case an emergency arises. Plans must be ready on paper and in the minds of some persons. I do not want any talk of this or even any reference to district authorities as far as possible. These plans will be, in the main, plans for maintaining security and discipline in an emergency. Of course, if unfortunately, such an occasion arises, full directions will be sent to you.

It is always possible for an enemy country to make a sudden attack. It is possible that Pakistan might do so. But I am almost sure that if Pakistan does so, it will be in Kashmir and not in any other part of India. That has been their policy and programme. If they attack Kashmir suddenly, we shall of course resist and we are prepared for it. We have made it clear that such an attack would lead to an all-out war. We have a certain advantage here because if Pakistan attacks Kashmir suddenly, then the initiative for the next step lies with us and we can take it when and in the manner we choose. Thus, it is highly unlikely that Pakistan will make a sudden attack on any part of India, apart from Kashmir.

These are speculations which I am sharing with you. We have to be prepared for all emergencies and, in a military sense, we are so prepared from now onwards. I still hope and partly believe that there will be no war and I do not wish to do anything on our side which might perhaps tip the balance on the side of war. Hence my earnest request to you that no public activity that savours of war preparation should be indulged in or encouraged in others, while at the same time our minds must keep prepared.

You will please keep this letter as top secret and not to be shared with others except, perhaps, a very few.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
19 August, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

This letter has been delayed by four days. You will no doubt appreciate that the burdens on us grow and it is not always easy to adhere to the strict time-table about these letters, much as I would like to do so.

2. The subject which has naturally created a good deal of public excitement, not only among Congressmen, but others also, has been the internal crisis in the Congress.[1] The immediate cause of this has been my resignation from the Congress Working Committee. This letter is hardly the place for me to discuss this matter, important as it is in its wider implications. I took the step I did after the most anxious and continuous thought, keeping in mind the various possible consequences. There were certain obvious risks involved and yet, in the balance, I came to the conclusion that I must take the step and that ultimately it would bring some clarity in our thought and in our actions. Our politics have had a tendency of becoming more and more foggy. Our intentions are good; our expression of them is also usually good, and yet somehow I have a feeling that we lose grip of the situation. It is not enough to

1. Despite his 'Unity of Action' resolution having been unanimously accepted by the Congress, the differences in outlook and policy with Tandon, the Congress President, made Nehru increasingly feel "not in tune" with the organizational authorities of the Congress. So he resigned on 6 August from the membership of the Working Committee after failing to persuade Tandon to reconstitute the Committee and the Central Election Board. Tandon, in turn, offered to relinquish the Presidentship of the Congress and the A.I.C.C., at a specially convened meeting on 8-9 September, accepted Tandon's resignation.

feel that we have done our best, nor is it enough to think that others are to blame. As persons holding responsible positions, whether in the Government or in a great popular organization like the Congress with a noble record behind it, we have to think in terms of something more than good intentions and hard work. We have to produce results and those results include popular reactions of the right kind. Any democracy has ultimately to base itself on the positive goodwill and support of the masses of the people. That is perhaps truer of us than of many others, because we have grown from strength to strength in the past and because large masses of our people were in tune with our urges and our activities. If that essential link is weakened, then we grow weaker as a positive force and only carry on by some momentum gained in the past.

3. I have long felt that there is this lack of clarity about our thinking and consequently about our actions. We live, to some extent, in the past, and when I say we, this applies to large numbers of people all over the country. While the past pursues us, the present overwhelms us with its problems and we try to keep pace with it to the best of our ability.

4. Of the many problems that confront us, the major problem has seemed to me not some programme of governmental activity, important as that is, but how to bring about some kind of communion between those in Government or outside, who give the lead, and the masses of our people. That lead has to be realistic. There are too many adventurist slogans and appeals, which lead us nowhere. At the same time, the so-called practical man has his eyes and nose too much near the ground to see further or to sense those movements and urges that influence people's minds. The most practical aspect of the programme is that it attracts and draws the people towards it, and helps in creating that co-operation which is so essential for success.

5. Most of us have felt that this general co-operation has been lacking; that, indeed, there is inertia and a certain inertness about the people. We tend to criticize them for this inertia or

for something worse. Our criticism may or may not be justified, but it does not help very much. We have to find the remedy and that remedy has to be not only our activity producing results, but also some key to people's minds and hearts. The same people, given the right atmosphere and the right lead, perform brave deeds; lacking these, they function at much lower levels. The question arises as to how far the fault might lie with us—our way of thinking or action or our lack of proper approach to the people. Nothing perhaps is more dangerous than complacency, more especially at a time of change and crisis which demand constant thought and adaptation.

6. At such a moment, fogginess of mind, a diffused way of thinking, and a reluctance to look down to the roots of the problem, are necessarily harmful. We become static and unprogressive and tend to cast the blame on others. A sense of frustration creeps in. We begin to distrust others and others begin to distrust us.

7. You will forgive me for this digression. I am convinced that we have to be straight with ourselves before we can influence others and make them understand us. Hence, I thought that my resignation from the Congress Working Committee might help in making people think hard about our problems and come to clear decisions. Without this clarity and a reasoned approach, no action can be effective. I have myself felt much better and calmer in mind since I took the decision to resign from the Congress Working Committee. I am convinced that it was a right decision and, though I am very much concerned about the future, I am not over-anxious or worried about it. If we have the right stuff in us, a few shocks now and then will not do us harm, but may well do us good. If we have not got that right stuff, then it does not very much matter what we do or do not do. For my part, I think that the result of all this will be good for the country.

8. As you know, this crisis in the Congress has had its repercussions on the Government. My colleague, Rafi Ahmad

Kidwai,[2] has left the Government and I think we are the poorer for his leaving. He made a success of his Ministry and was full of new ideas. For the moment, no new Minister has been appointed to take his place. There are some proposals under consideration for an amalgamation of some Ministries.

9. Since I wrote to you last, the new Parliamentary session has begun and the President has surveyed the scene in his opening Address to Parliament.[3] There has been a debate on his Address and, in the course of my reply, I dealt at some length with our foreign policy and more especially with Indo-Pakistan relations.[4] These relations have grown more and more tense and, though we carry on our normal vocations, there is a sense of impending tragedy about us. I still hope and think that there will be no war and yet there can be no certainty of this, and the next two months are difficult and critical. It is certain that we, on our part, will not undertake military operations. But the Prime Minister of Pakistan has made it clear, in the course of a long correspondence with me, that he will not promise not to attack Kashmir. We, on our part, have also made it equally clear that an attack on Kashmir is an attack on India as a whole and will result in a war between India and Pakistan.[5] There the

2. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 217.

3. The President's Address reiterated India's determination to avoid war unless it was thrust upon her and said that defensive measures had been undertaken in the interest of peace. It expressed the hope that the tension between India and Pakistan would disappear. It also mentioned the Government's proposal to constitute a National Development Council with the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers as its members, and spoke of the Government's determination to check rising prices.

4. On 11 August, Nehru stated in Parliament that, "India has won the battle of Kashmir from any psychological or real, basic point of view," and that, "all this terrible shouting that is going on in Pakistan is the result of the uttermost frustration among its leaders because they know they have lost it." He complimented Sheikh Abdullah for having triumphed over Pakistan's two-nation theory and reiterated India's commitment to peace.

5. Nehru made this clear in his letter to Liaquat Ali Khan on 4 August 1951.

matter stands, and my correspondence with Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan has for the present come to an end.

10. Reports and rumours reach us of concentrations of Pakistan troops near the Indian borders and of other preparations for war, both in Western and Eastern Pakistan. For our part, we have made such defence preparations as we considered necessary. But we have sternly discouraged what is called civil defence measures and the like, because we thought that these would result in creating an atmosphere of impending war and we wished to avoid this as far as we could.

11. There are reports that regular soldiers of the Pakistan Army have gone to 'Azad Kashmir', disguised as tribal people. If this is so, then there is a possibility of some kind of an arranged attack, ostensibly made by tribal people, but really by trained soldiers, on Kashmir. The situation is, therefore, far from safe and yet, I repeat, I do not think it likely that war will come; and my main reason for thinking so is that we are perfectly prepared for it.

12. It is more important, from the point of view of civil defence, that there should be no panic and no uneasiness among the people and especially that our minority communities might feel safe. Their feeling of insecurity would be a weakening factor, apart from this being a slur on us. It is for this reason that I have laid repeated stress in these letters on creating a feeling of communal harmony and on suppressing with speed, and even a measure of ruthlessness, any attempts to break that harmony and bring about discord.

13. A heartening feature of the situation has been the response of large numbers of leading Muslims all over India to this situation. Many Muslim organizations and individuals have given public utterance to this and pledged their loyalty to

India, even against Pakistan.[6] The most important of these statements is the memorandum given by Dr. Zakir Hussain[7] and other eminent Muslims in India to Dr. Graham.[8] This memorandum is a closely reasoned and well presented case for the Indian Muslims, bringing out an aspect of this matter which perhaps is seldom borne in mind. It is a perfect answer to the cries of *jehad* in Pakistan and to the criticisms made in foreign countries to our policy in regard to Kashmir and Pakistan. I would commend your attention to this memorandum which should have the greatest publicity.

14. Dr. Graham is in Delhi and our talks take place from time to time on rather general topics. As you know, we have not accepted the last resolution of the Security Council in regard to Kashmir. But we have shown every courtesy to Dr. Graham and supplied him with such information as he desired to acquaint himself fully with the problem.

15. The Independence Day celebrations in various parts of India have given an impression of solemnity and calm strength. In particular, this was so in Delhi where a vast concourse of people gathered under the walls of the historic Red Fort. In spite of all that has happened, August 15th has a particular appeal for our people. That is as it should be, for that day will be remembered as a historic day not only for us, but for the world.

6 For example, on 31 July 1951, a meeting of Muslims in Bombay pledged to "stand by our Prime Minister in the defence of the motherland." Similar statements were issued by Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, and other organizations and by prominent individuals.

7. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p. 439.

8. The memorandum of 16 August warned the Security Council that "Pakistan's policy towards Kashmir is fraught with the gravest peril to the forty million Muslims of India." It argued that the "concept of Pakistan was vague, obscure and never clearly defined" and it had rendered the position of Muslims in India weak ever since Pakistan decided on "driving out" the Hindus from Pakistan. The memorandum condemned Pakistan's aggression in Kashmir and the incessant cries of *jehad* raised there as "it would bring suffering to Indian Muslims and destruction in the long run."

States Bill goes very far in bringing democratic institutions in these States. I am happy that we are going ahead in this matter, even though some people fear that there are risks involved in these changes. There are risks in every step that we might take, and there are sometimes greater risks in not taking a step for fear of consequences. Having taken the road to democracy, it is difficult to stop half-way or to seek a diversion from it. We have to trust the people if we ask for their trust.

17. Another important measure, long pending, is the bill dealing with the development and control of industries.[11] Then there is the Hindu Code Bill which comes up regularly before each session of Parliament. It would be a pity if all the labour spent on this Bill was wasted. We hope to make an effort therefore to put it on the statute book before this session ends. If this happens, as I hope it will, I am sure that our present Parliament will be remembered more because of this measure of social reform than for any other piece of legislation or activity.

18. I am glad that the proposed railway strike has been postponed[12] by the All India Railwaymen's Federation. The

9. The Bill was passed on 3 September 1951.

10. The Press (Objectionable Matter) Bill passed on 7 October sought to curb subversive activities and certain very grave offences including scurrilous writings in the press. All laws violative of the fundamental rights were repealed; there was to be no pre-censorship of any newspaper nor any anticipatory action taken; security could be demanded if the freedom of the press was abused and forfeited by an order of the judicial authority.

11. The Indian Companies (Amendment) Bill, enacted on 14 September 1951, replaced the ordinance which had been issued to check such abuses as monopoly practices in the open market. The Bill restricted the appointment, tenure and powers of the managing agents.

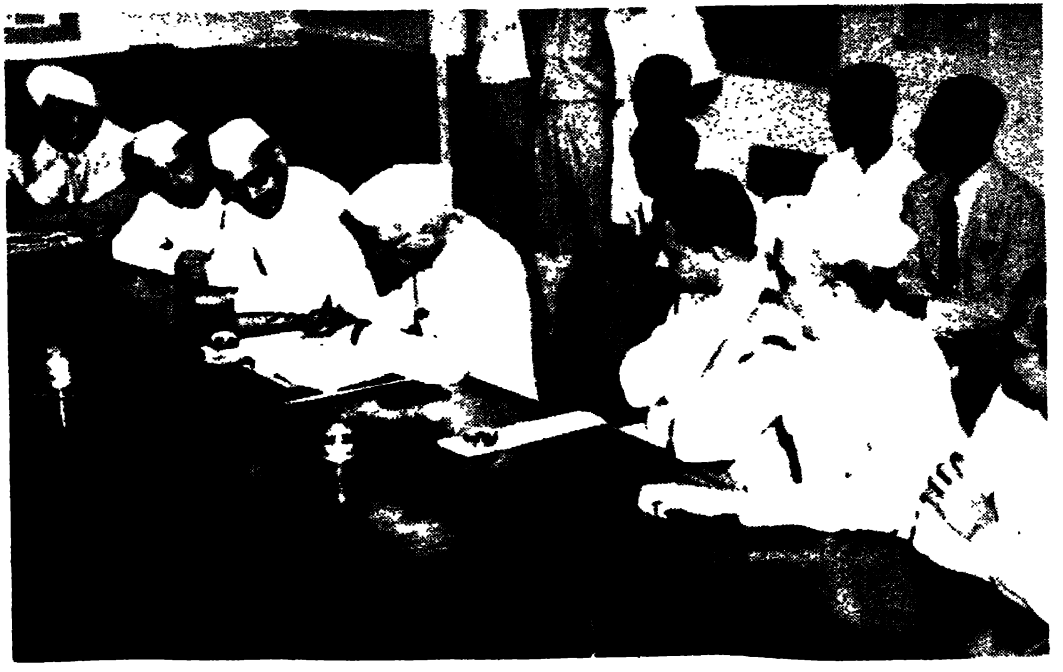
12. The strike, which was to start from 27 August, was, by the decision of the Federation on 10 August, postponed.



With King Tribhuvan of Nepal,
New Delhi, 11 November 1950



New Delhi, 4 March 1951



Signing the First Five Year Plan,
New Delhi, 7 June 1951



In the cockpit of an Indian Air Force plane while flying over Bihar,
20 June 1951

postponement is for two months; I wish it had been abandoned altogether. I hope that in the intervening period negotiations will lead to a satisfactory settlement of some of the outstanding problems.

19. The first ship carrying foodgrains from the U.S.A. under the Loan Agreement reached Bombay some days ago, and many more ships are following it. Nevertheless, the food position is not wholly satisfactory in some parts of India and we have to be careful. Belated rains just prevented a further tragedy in some provinces. But the lack of rains during July and part of August has gravely injured our crop prospects, especially in the U.P.

20. In the Punjab there has been a marked improvement in the general administration, and certain steps taken by the Governor to deal with corruption and black marketing have produced substantial results. In Pepsu the situation is unsatisfactory and there is a great deal of communal tension between the Sikhs and the Hindus.[13] The unfortunate State of Assam has had to deal with big floods again.

21. I have pointed out in my previous letters that there has been an increasing flow of migrants from East Bengal to West Bengal. This continues. It may be partly due to the monsoon season when such migrations occur; it is certainly due also to the war scare in Pakistan; and then it is due to the living conditions of the minority communities in East Bengal which are such as to exercise continuous pressure on them. This is a serious problem which may become very serious indeed. Thus far, the numbers involved, though considerable, are not overwhelming. We try to deal with this problem of Bengal separately and our efforts have often met with some success. But, essentially, it cannot be isolated from the major Indo-Pakistan problem and difficulties will continue till that major problem moves towards a solution. Some fantastic remedies are sometimes put forward, such as, exchange of populations or a

13. The Akali Dal was at this time agitating against the Congress Ministry.

slice of territory to be taken from Pakistan for the rehabilitation of the migrants.[14] Both these suggestions are foolish in the extreme. Indeed, they cannot be given effect to without war, and if we rule out war for this purpose, then we have to think differently. If, unhappily, war comes, then far from settling this problem, it will produce a host of others, apart from the enormous injury it would do to the countries involved.

22. In Korea, the Kaesong talks continue without producing any results. It is extraordinary how the two delegations can manage to continue discussing the same point day after day and week after week without making the slightest progress. The question at issue is the ceasefire line. The U.N. Commanders want, more or less, the present line which, in some places, goes beyond the 38th parallel. The North Koreans and the Chinese want to have the 38th parallel as the ceasefire line. As the present military position is much more favourable to the U.N. than the 38th parallel, they are very reluctant to give up this advantage. I am still inclined to think, though the hope grows dim, that the ceasefire talks will ultimately succeed.

23. In Iran there appears to have been another deadlock between the U.K. representatives and the Iranian Government. The U.K. had accepted the basis of nationalization of the oil industry there and had offered otherwise also much more favourable terms.[15] But, so far as the latest news goes, the

14. S.P. Mookerjee, speaking at Calcutta on 30 July 1951, said that if the Government of India feared to interfere in the matter of the security of Hindus in East Bengal as it might lead to armed conflict, the only other possible solution was to effect a planned exchange of population and property at Government level.

15. The British proposal of 13 August, recognizing the principle of nationalization of oil industry, suggested that the ownership of oil be vested in an Iranian Company and the Anglo-Indian Oil Company should transfer all its assets in lieu of compensation; the production and refining could be jointly controlled by the British and the Iranian agencies; and its transport and marketing outside Iran retained by Britain. On 18 August 1951, Iran rejected the proposals as inconsistent with her plan of nationalization of oil industry and stated that she could not give a monopoly of sale of her oil to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

Iranians are not satisfied with this. It is interesting to note that, as an indirect result of this conflict, the Iraq Government has profited and they will now be given a royalty of 50% on the profits of the oil business there.[16] This is a considerable advantage. If the oil companies had been a little wiser and offered something like this to Iran a year or two ago, there would probably have been no crisis there now.

24. One of the major issues before us at present is the proposed Japanese peace treaty. This has been sponsored by the U.S.A. and the U.K. Governments. The other Powers concerned, excepting China, have been consulted about it. We made a number of suggestions towards change, but only a few minor ones were accepted; our major proposals were rejected.[17] Our whole approach to this has been that such a treaty should not only make Japan an independent nation, but should lead towards a lessening of tension in the Far East and be some step towards settlement. We have felt that the proposed treaty might well produce a contrary effect. First of all, any such arrangement which leaves out China, the country most concerned, is obviously incomplete and not realistic. Then again, the proposals to station American troops in Japan and have U.S. bases there appear to us to be objectionable. The presence of those troops will be a constant irritant to nearby countries who will think that they are meant for their invasion. There are many other points involved in this draft treaty, but I need not trouble you with them here. After the most careful consideration we have come to the conclusion that we cannot sign this treaty.[18] Hence, we are not sending any representatives to the San Francisco Conference. This conference is meant to be a formal affair where no discussion can take place about the

16. The Agreement was signed at Baghdad on 13 August between the Iraq Government, the Iraq Petroleum Company, the Mosul Petroleum Company and the Barrah Petroleum Company.

17. The United States, on 12 August, expressed their inability to accept the Indian proposals.

18. This was communicated to the United States on 23 August 1951.

treaty and only signatures are asked for. It has been stated, however, that any country can record its objections or its criticisms to some part of the treaty. The record will in no way lessen the legal significance of that treaty or lessen the responsibility of the signatory country. For us to sign this treaty would have been to go counter to many policies which we have thus far pursued, and it would have made us indirectly responsible for certain decisions which we entirely disapprove.

25. In this matter we have had full consultations with the Government of Burma, who are equally dissatisfied with the proposed treaty. They have also decided not to sign it.[19] We do not yet know what the final decision of the Indonesian Government will be. It is possible that, under great pressure, they might sign it, even though they disapprove of it. Both the U.S.A. and the U.K. Governments have attached considerable importance to India's signature to this treaty, and yet they have paid little heed to India's advice and suggestions. The old practice of deciding about Asian questions in Europe and America, and not thinking too much of the opinion of Asian countries, still holds. That policy has not succeeded in the past and is not likely to succeed in the future.

26. Our decision not to sign this treaty will naturally cause disappointment and some resentment in the U.S.A. We are sorry for this and it is because of this that we gave the most earnest consideration to the draft treaty. We could not, however, give up our basic position even though some of the consequences might not be to our liking. I am sure that, in the long run India's attitude will be appreciated. We propose to finalize our decision about this peace treaty in the course of the next few days. Probably in a week from today we shall communicate our decision to the U.S.A. It will later be published. Till then no publicity should be given to it.

19. The Burmese Government communicated their decision to the United States on 23 August 1951.

27. The King of Nepal has been on a short informal visit to Delhi.[20] This has given us an opportunity of discussing with him many of the difficult problems which the people of Nepal have to face.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

20. From 13 to 21 August 1951.

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New Delhi
31 August, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The outstanding event of the past few weeks, from the international point of view, has been India's refusal to attend the San Francisco Conference on the Japanese peace treaty. Among the Asian countries, India and Burma have refused. Indonesia is sending a delegation to San Francisco but has not yet decided whether to sign or not. It is probable that they will ultimately sign the multilateral treaty.

2. India's decision not to sign the treaty has a peculiar and far-reaching significance. Because of this fact, considerable irritation has been caused in official circles in the United States at our decision. Indeed the reply of the U.S. Government was couched in language which is not usual in correspondence between Governments.[1] I confess that we were somewhat irritated at it, but after much thought, we decided not to use

1. The United States Government regretting India's decision to make a separate peace treaty with Japan said in its note of 26 August that there can be no united action for peace unless the nations "are willing to accept what to each may seem imperfections" in one another. It showed surprise that India considered the treaty incapable of restoring the honour and equality among the comity of free nations to Japan when in fact the treaty had been accepted by Japan. The note claimed to see a "discrepancy" in the Indian Government's stand on Taiwan. It also accused India of applying "different tests" to Kurile and the Ryukus islands, for while India wanted the transfer of sovereignty of Kurile islands to the Soviet Union, she criticized U.N. trusteeship of Ryukus islands under the United States authority.

strong language in our reply.[2] As our action was strong and definite, there was no necessity for the language to be unnecessarily strong.

3. I wrote to you in my last fortnightly letter about some of the reasons why we could not support the American draft treaty. Many other reasons can be advanced for this decision and I have been quite clear in my mind that this was the only possible decision we could take in the circumstances. Any other decision would not only have been wrong on the merits but harmful to us from every point of view. It would have been a reversal of our policy completely and would have brought far-reaching consequences in its train. It may have given some immediate pleasure to the United States, but it was unlikely even to bring us any benefits. Having surrendered on the main issue once, we would have been unable to hold out on other matters which affect us. I think it is clear that the respect for India and for her independent line has gone up in other countries, including the U.K. and the U.S.A., even though they may dislike our decision. In Asia, our decision has had a powerful effect. It seems to me fairly clear that the Japanese people, or a great majority of them, approve of India's action, even though they might not express this approval publicly. We have had some evidence of this. In Japan, the Prime Minister, Mr. Yoshida,[3] has recently faced an angry Diet, which demanded new elections.[4]

2. In their reply of 26 August 1951, the Indian Government merely reiterated India's "inherent and unquestionable right" not to sign the treaty and said that the separate treaty with Japan would not run counter to the main provisions of the draft treaty to be signed at San Francisco.

3. Shigeru Yoshida (1878-1967). Prime Minister of Japan, 1948-54.

4. The Socialist Party, during the Diet (Parliament) session on 17 and 18 August 1951, accused the Prime Minister of 'secret diplomacy'; criticized the Allied Powers for violating their own pledges not to seek territorial aggrandizement; declared that the draft treaty in no way satisfied the wishes of the Japanese people; and strongly criticized the proposal to retain the United States troops in Japan after the treaty came into force. The Party also decided to send its representatives to the San Francisco Conference as observers, but not as delegates.

4. Our general policy is not intended to side with any group or country or to oppose any group or country for opposition's sake. We have tried, in spite of difficulties and misunderstandings, to keep friendly relations with rival countries. We have had a large measure of success in this. But the issues that come up repeatedly have to be judged from the wider point of view of war and peace in the world. Unfortunately, because of fear, the Western countries are inclined more and more towards fascist and military elements in Germany, Japan, Spain, etc. The rearmament of Germany under the old leadership, and the proposed rearmament of Japan, also under the old military leadership, are being encouraged. This is a dangerous trend, which would do little good even to America. In any event, what is happening is that extreme elements on both sides are coming to the front. On the Russian side, we find Communist expansionism; on the other side, we find reactionary elements joining together. The middle groups tend to disappear. India cannot line up with the Soviet or the other Communist countries, nor can it line up with these militarist and fascist groups. It is difficult to live in splendid isolation. But, in effect, India is not isolated and a wide circle of people all over the world welcome the general policy we are pursuing and think of it as something that gives hope for the prevention of war. In spite of our desire to remain aloof of international entanglements, a certain leadership is thrust upon India in pursuing the policy we have adopted which has a large appeal to considerable numbers of people abroad, more especially in Asia.

5. The rearming of Japan can only lead to war on a big scale. It may be that if unfortunately the Kaesong ceasefire talks fail, the war there, which has never stopped, will become fiercer. Attempts might be made to train up and send Japanese troops to Korea. If this happens, there will be strong resentment in Japan and the war in the Far East might well spread further. Our action, though criticized by some, is some kind of a brake in the spread of war mentality.

6. Indo-Pakistan relations continue to be tense, though, on the whole, I have a feeling that the situation is slightly easier than it was. But this does not take us very far and the immediate crisis might well last another two months or so. I think that if we can prevent a conflict during the next two months, there will be some slow toning down of the crisis. But we cannot expect miracles to happen and even the process of toning down and healing will take time. At the present moment, the only policy we can pursue in regard to Pakistan is not to surrender on any important point, to keep ourselves strong and prepared to meet any contingency, and at the same time to keep perfectly cool and strive for peace. Rather wild demands for war, made directly or indirectly, exhibit complete immaturity of thought and understanding.[5] The Hyderabad operations have had one bad effect on our people. They seem to think that any war would be a brief affair involving little troubles. As a matter of fact, if we are entangled in war with Pakistan, that war will neither be brief nor gentlemanly, if I may use this word. It is likely to be a bitter conflict, full of suppressed hatred. The influence of reactionary and extreme elements will increase in both countries. So far as our country is concerned, we have to take very special care, in the present context of affairs, that we do not forget our basic stand against communalism. I am sure that it would have been easier for us to deal with Pakistan, if our own hands had been clean in this matter.

7. Dr. Graham has just come back to Delhi from Karachi on his fourth visit. I have met him again. We have not proceeded far and I rather doubt if these talks, which have been conducted wholly informally, will yield fruitful results. Meanwhile, the preparations for the Kashmir Constituent

5. For example, D.P. Mishra, who resigned as Home Minister of Madhya Pradesh on 22 August 1951, stated that the only honourable course left for India was to issue an ultimatum to Pakistan demanding that she ensure the safety of the Hindu population or face invasion and occupation by Indian troops.

Assembly go on and elections will take place in September and October. The Assembly will meet there sometime afterwards, possibly in November,or a little earlier. I am going to Kashmir for the next weekend, Saturday and Sunday, partly because of the Convocation of the University there, but chiefly to have an opportunity of discussing various developments with Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues. It is important that we should remain in full touch and harmony with each other.

8. I had taken some pride in the fact that the morale of our people near the border was good. I am afraid I cannot congratulate myself quite so much about this matter now. It is true that the morale is excellent, generally speaking. But it is true also that during the last fortnight, fairly large numbers of people have left border cities like Amritsar. We must check this exodus, as it is a sign of fear and apprehension and fear is contagious. There is really no reason for people to run away from the border areas. If, unfortunately, war comes as a result of Pakistan's attack on us anywhere, we are strong enough to prevent our territory from being invaded. There may be some petty raids which it is impossible to prevent. There may also be occasional bombing of some of our cities. This bombing cannot go far because of the lack of resources in Pakistan. In any event, we should not be frightened by an odd bomb dropping nearby.

9. There is one matter which I should like to mention to you, as it distresses me. Because of this talk of war as well as the internal crises, including what is called the Congress crisis, the astrologers appear to carry on a flourishing trade, making all kinds of prophecies, sometimes adverse and at other times more optimistic. This emergence of astrologers among our responsible people is greatly to be deplored. We cannot run a country on the basis of astrologers' predictions nor can we run a war with this background. Even if there was an element of truth in astrology,. which I do not believe, it is wrong to refer to astrologers to guide our actions. I should therefore like you and your colleagues to discourage sternly and even ruthlessly this practice of clinging to the stars and expecting them not only to

guide us but to control our activities. True or false, this is a harmful practice and it lessens our credit both in India and abroad.

10. The so-called Congress crisis continues and will continue till at least the next meeting of the A.I.C.C. on September 8th and 9th. But this crisis has already had one good effect. It has roused up the people to think of fundamental matters and there is more reality in our discussions now. That is all to the good.

11. I have recently spoken both at the Congress Parliamentary Party meeting [6] and a press conference [7] and have dealt with many of the issues that are troubling our people. I will not repeat what I have said there. But I would draw your particular attention to it as explaining our approach to these problems. It seems to me that what is necessary is clarity in Congress decisions and in the activities governing Congressmen. There has been in the past far too much of an attempt to shirk this clear thinking. Recent events have shown the importance and vitality of the Congress because the whole country has been roused up by this so-called crisis.

6. Nehru warned the Congress Parliamentary Party on 21 August that the Party which was still a force in the country and had a bright future was drifting from its accepted course of broadening its base and of keeping in constant touch with the people. The meeting adopted a resolution recording its confidence in Nehru's leadership.

7. At his press conference on 28 August, Nehru reiterated his Government's commitment to a "proper plebiscite" in Kashmir as they did not want "a running sore going on between India and Pakistan," but clarified that the plebiscite should only be on the basis of "economic and political considerations," and not based on "religious fanaticism or bigotry." He dismissed the possibility of a large-scale invasion from Pakistan and reiterated his Government's resolve to settle all disputes with Pakistan peacefully. He explained that India had decided against signing the multilateral treaty with Japan as a matter of 'principle'. On the Congress crisis he said that the A.I.C.C. had been convened to "give a clear direction as to what Congress stands for" so that it could take a turn from the "wrong direction" and for which he was prepared to become its President if called upon.

12. You will be interested to know that the People's Government of China are sending a cultural goodwill mission to India.[8] This will be coming sometime in October and will spend some weeks in India. The mission will include prominent educationists, scientists and artists.

13. The food position is not as satisfactory as I would like it to be. We avoid severe crisis, but we have not been able to provide for the future as much as we wanted to do. The rains have been poor in several parts of the country and much depends on the next ten days or so. If rains come in even now, they will do much good, although some loss has already been caused by the dry period in July-August.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

8. A delegation of twenty one members visited India for one month from 28 October 1951.

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New Delhi
17 September, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The last fortnight has been a very heavy one for me. The meeting of the All India Congress Committee took place in Delhi and resulted in a fresh burden and responsibility being cast upon me.[1] I am afraid the next few months are going to be a very difficult test of my powers of endurance.

2. Early in this month Dr. Graham returned from Karachi and we had long talks. Ultimately, he made certain suggestions in regard to "demilitarization." This was his first formal communication to us since he came to India.[2] To this we have sent a formal reply.[3] Dr. Graham went to Pakistan and from there has proceeded to Geneva.[4] His visit to India and Pakistan has thus ended and he will now present his report to the Security Council of the U.N.

3. In our reply to Dr. Graham we made clear our position again in regard to the withdrawal of our forces from Kashmir. We had no desire to keep them there except for reasons of security. As the situation improved, we would gladly withdraw

1. Nehru assumed the Presidentship of the Congress on 9 September 1951.

2. Graham returned to India on 30 August 1951, and on 7 September suggested to Nehru a solution, based broadly on the U.N. resolutions of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949 which had been accepted by both India and Pakistan. He also suggested that the detailed negotiations should take place before the proposals were finally accepted.

3. On 11 September 1951.

4. He went to Pakistan on the 8th and left for Geneva on the 12th September 1951.

them. But we must always keep in mind the dangers that threaten Kashmir state. In any event, Pakistan had to withdraw all her troops, regular or irregular, and disband and disarm the so-called 'Azad' forces. That is to say, that the area at present occupied by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir state should be cleared of Pakistan influence. We would, on our part, withdraw some of our forces, as the danger lessened.

4. You may remember that two years ago we had agreed to a resolution of the U.N. Commission, which laid down that Pakistan should withdraw all her forces and that India should thereupon withdraw the bulk of her forces. Pakistan did not act up to this resolution. As a matter of fact, throughout 1949 and 1950, and even early in 1951, we continued the process of withdrawal of our forces and actually withdrew a little over 40% of them. Thus, we have gone very far in withdrawing the bulk of our forces. During the last few months of crisis, we have sent back some forces to Kashmir.

5. I do not know what Dr. Graham is likely to report. I imagine that he will indicate the differences which still exist between India and Pakistan in regard to this matter. He did not discuss with us any question other than that of withdrawal of forces. The Security Council will then presumably consider his report. So far as we know, an attempt will be made to avoid any kind of a break.

6. The situation vis-a-vis Pakistan appears to have toned down to some extent. There is not quite the same amount of war-mongering there, but occasionally threats are thrown out. We cannot take any risks and have still to be prepared for any contingency, though I think that the chances of war have somewhat receded.

7. We have informed Japan[5] of our desire to put an end to the state of war between India and Japan as soon as the San

5. On 8 September 1951.

Francisco Conference and sign the Japanese peace treaty led to angry comments. Second thoughts were a little calmer and gradually there has been a slight understanding of our position. I am sure that the stand we took will be appreciated more and more later. Meanwhile, the Kaesong ceasefire talks have practically ended and war is in full progress in Korea.[8] There appears to be little chance of a resumption of the ceasefire talks. Probably there will be an intensification of warfare after the partial lull that we have had.

8. There has been a controversy between India and Pakistan about the exodus of Hindus from East Bengal to West Bengal. We have no doubt that our figures are more or less accurate. There still continues to be a marked excess in the movement of Hindus from Pakistan to West Bengal. The average daily figures have recently been:

	Going from East to West Bengal	Going from West to East Bengal
Hindus	3,324	2,500
Muslims	1,247	1,424

These figures, of course, include casual travellers as well as migrants.

6. The treaty was signed by 49 nations including Japan on 8 September 1951.

7. The Japanese Government communicated their appreciation of India's stand on 10 September 1951.

8. After North Korea suspended the talks on 23 August 1951 over the alleged violation of the neutral zone by American troops, the radio broadcasts on both sides blamed each other for the failure of the talks. Amidst continuous reports of alleged violations of territory by American troops, the acceptance of the charge of an American plane having bombed the Kaesong neutral zone led to rejection of the suggestion for the resumption of the ceasefire talks made by the United States on 6 September.

9. The Pakistan press has complained a great deal about Muslims going to West Pakistan from India across the Rajputana border. There is no doubt that there is such a flow, though it is difficult to give numbers. These Muslims go without permits and at their own risk. Probably several hundreds go every week.

10. The days of the present Parliament are numbered and it is difficult to say how it can be extended beyond the 6th October. After that there are *Dussehra* or *Puja* holidays and then *Moharram*. Immediately after comes the Congress session in Delhi.[9] We are, therefore, trying to finish our work by the 6th October. This is by no means easy, as we have got many important bills to be considered and passed. The Press Bill took a full week even for reference to the select committee.[10] Today the Hindu Code Bill was taken up. In view of the shortness of time available, it has become quite impossible to think of passing the entire Hindu Code Bill during this session. At the same time, we do not wish to arrive at no final result. We have, therefore, decided to proceed with Part II of the Bill, that is, dealing with marriage and divorce and finalize that at least during this session.

11. There has been scarcity of rice in some districts of Madras as well as in some other parts of the country. The rice we had hoped to get from abroad has failed us. I think there is no way out for us but to encourage the consumption of wheat, *milo*, tapioca, etc. The argument that people are not used to this kind of diet does not take us very far. When necessity arises, we *must get used to what is available.*

12. After a long gap, which caused considerable damage to our crops, the rains have come and have been fairly widespread. This has retrieved the situation to some extent and, if all goes well, we might have a fair *rabi* harvest.

9 It was held from 17 to 19 October 1951.

10. It was referred to the select committee on 15 September 1951.

13. The Prime Minister of Afghanistan[11] paid a visit to Delhi on his way back to Afghanistan from America.[12] He had a very enthusiastic reception here and addressed Members of Parliament also.[13] I believe he has gone back with pleasant memories of his stay in Delhi and our friendly relations with Afghanistan have been strengthened.

14. The U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Loy Henderson, has been transferred[14] to Iran and in his place a new Ambassador, Mr. Chester Bowles,[15] is due to come.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

11. Shah Mahmud Khan Ghazi (1886-1959). Prime Minister of Afghanistan, 1946-53.

12. Came to Delhi on 4 September after arriving in Bombay on 1 September.

13. On 5 September 1951.

14. The transfer of Loy Henderson and appointment of a new Ambassador was announced by the U.S. Government on 12 September 1951. Chester Bowles, the new Ambassador, presented his credentials to the President of India on 1 November 1951.

15. (1901-1986). Leading Democrat from Connecticut; held several administrative posts between 1943 and 1946; Ambassador to India and Nepal, 1951-53; U.S. Congressman, 1959-61; Ambassador to India, 1963-69; author of *A View from New Delhi* (1969), *Mission to India* (1974), and *Promises to Keep: My Years in Public Life, 1941-1969* (1971).

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New Delhi
22 September, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,*

I would like to draw your special attention to the Home Ministry letter No. F. 25/59/51-Ests. dated the 5th September, 1951, regarding tours of Ministers in connection with the election campaign. I have no doubt that these views, which are based on sound political convention, are fully acceptable to your colleagues and yourself and that you will so regulate your tour arrangements as to avoid any criticism that Ministers are misusing their official position for Party advantage during the elections.

2. The Home Ministry letter does not refer to the question of travelling allowances of Ministers for journeys which have, for their main purpose, the election campaign. For such journeys, I am sure you will agree that no travelling expenses or daily allowances should be charged by Ministers. This view is, on the face of it, a fair and sensible one; it is also the view, which, on technical grounds of the interpretation of Constitution, the Comptroller and Auditor-General has also reached.

3. The general principles mentioned in the Home Ministry letter should be applied from now onwards. It should be easy to separate purely election meetings from meetings meant for explaining governmental policies and the like. Nevertheless, this may not be possible during the lengthy period of time and the two might overlap. Generally speaking, public meetings

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

should be sponsored non-officially, although Government officials may give some assistance for reasons of security and order. This should be considered a general rule, though there may be obvious exceptions when the function is largely governmental.

4. As general elections are taking place in January 1952, it may be presumed that for some weeks previously the activities of Ministers on tour are much more concerned with elections. Therefore, during the month of December specially, care should be taken to keep Government officials apart from public meetings which are likely to be election meetings. This does not apply to any security arrangements and the like.

5. I would also like to draw your attention to a letter you must have received from our Election Commissioner dated 7th September, in which he has made certain suggestions about the organization for elections. These suggestions are important and I hope that the attention of your State officials has been drawn to them.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
4 October, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The Parliamentary session continues and as it approaches its end, its activity becomes more and more feverish. There is so much work to be got through and so little time. Perhaps there would be enough time for all our work if the rules of Parliament were not such as to permit unlimited speeches and discussions. We have had one speech lasting four hours on a particular clause of a Bill. (This was a clause of the Hindu Code Bill). Unless the rules of Parliament are changed, it will become increasingly difficult to get through any substantial amount of work. If this is so now with less than 300 Members, the difficulties later on with a much larger membership of Parliament will proportionately increase. There will also be two Houses after the elections. The prospect for important legislation is not encouraging.

2. Ever since we came into office, and indeed long before that, our major plank was the abolition of the zamindari system. There was not much delay on our part and many State Governments, soon after assuming office, undertook this legislation. The subject was complicated and various committees investigated it. The question of compensation became a major stumbling block. Various States dealt with it in various ways. Ultimately, some States passed these zamindari abolition laws, but the courts then came into the picture and issued injunctions and the like. As you know, this was one of the major reasons for our amending our Constitution. We did that and yet again the matter was referred to the courts and progress

was stopped.[1] Probably we shall get over this particular hurdle also.[2] We do not know what other difficulties and hurdles we may still have to overcome.

3. This exasperating slowness in a matter of high urgency and importance makes one think furiously. It is obvious that this pace is much too slow and we shall be caught up by other events and developments, if we do not move faster. It has often been said that agrarian reform is the most important question in Asia today. We realized that long ago and even took steps to that end. But the Constitution and rules we have framed have made it difficult for us to increase the pace of progress.

4. The Hindu Code Bill has been pending for four or five years, apart from the long investigations that preceded this. It has come up for debate repeatedly before Parliament and interminable speeches have been delivered. It was obviously a controversial measure and it was not our desire to suppress debate or even to treat this as a strictly Party measure necessitating a whip. The result has been that after every effort, we have failed thus far to get even a part of it through. In our attempt to get something done during this session, we decided to take up Part II of the Bill only, that is marriage and divorce. Even that has been hung up and, with the utmost reluctance, we have had to postpone its consideration, because there simply was no time for it during this session.[3] I have no doubt that a considerable majority in Parliament desired the passage of this Bill with minor alterations. But that majority was helpless before a determined minority and we had to confess defeat for the moment at least.

5. I do not think, however, that all this time on the Hindu Code Bill has been wasted. It has kept this important subject

1. On 12 September 1951, several zamindars of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh challenged in the Supreme Court the validity of the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951 under Article 32 of the Constitution.

2. On 5 October, the Supreme Court dismissed the petitions and held the First Amendment Act, 1951 as valid.

3 It was postponed on 26 September 1951.

before the public and made people think about it. It had made it one of the major issues in India and I have little doubt that it will have to be taken up and passed sometime or other. For my part, I am convinced that progress in India must be on all fronts—political, economic and social. Unless this happens, we shall get held up. Some people think that we should keep the social aspect apart and concentrate on the political and economic. There can be no such division. Our social organization has shown both virtues and vices in the past. It has displayed an amazing cohesion and continuity. It has also progressively weakened the political and economic set-up, apart from other consequences in the social domain. Whatever its virtues might have been in the past, it is clear that major changes are required in the present. The Hindu Code Bill represents an attempt to bring about some changes without shaking up too much the social organization. The Bill, as drafted, was not perfect and no doubt could be changed. But the essential principles underlying it were important and could not be given up. The struggle to achieve these changes will have to continue.

6. As I write this letter, the Press Bill is being hotly argued in Parliament.[4] There has been a fierce attack upon it in the press and much misrepresentation has been indulged in.[5] It is stated that the Prime Minister and the Home Minister have broken the assurances they gave.[6] This is completely untrue. Many of

4. The Press Bill introduced in Parliament on 31 August 1951 was passed on 7 October and received the President's assent on 23 October. See also *ante*, p. 480.

5. Certain sections of the press and some Members of Parliament charged that the Press Bill restricted the freedom of the press by including new and dangerous offences and feared that the clause defining objectionable matter would be utilized to punish many innocent people and would encroach upon honest journalism.

6. On 3 October 1951, several Members of the opposition in Parliament charged that the Home Minister and the Prime Minister had gone back on the assurance given during the discussion on the Constitution Amendment Bill that all clauses in the Press Emergency Act which were criticized in the newspapers would be removed from the new Bill. However, in the proposed Bill all the provisions of the Act had been incorporated.

us, and I am of that number, are most reluctant to pass legislation limiting the freedom of the press or of expression. But it seems clear to me, and indeed it is generally recognized, that something should be done to clarify the present position in regard to the press. This present position is chaotic. It is also generally admitted that some sections of the press are being used for purposes which are most injurious from various points of view. They preach rank communalism and inflame people's minds and passions. Their moral standards are terribly low and often the purpose of some of these disreputable journals is just pure blackmail. Something has to be done about this.

7. The chief objection to the press laws in the past was that they armed the executive with excessive powers and that executive was an irresponsible one then. Today the executives are popular and responsible; even so, the Press Bill does not give the executive any final power to take action. The decision has to be by judicial process. This itself is a tremendous change from the old press laws. The question in debate, therefore, should be a very limited one as to how far we should go in defining what should not be done. I think you will find that these definitions have been strictly limited and it is not fair to say that the Government wants to interfere with the freedom of the press or with any kind of legitimate criticism. There is always a risk of a wrong step being taken, however good the law. There is also a more obvious risk of our public life being poisoned by a certain section of depraved journalism. Anyone can bring out a newspaper; any monied person can use the press for his own personal advantage.

8. It must be remembered that the press today is something different from what it was even a generation ago. Mechanical devices have made it easy to produce newspapers and periodicals on a large scale. Only money is required. There is no other standard of capacity or moral behaviour. No one suggests that the more dangerous weapons of war should be given freely to anybody who wants them or who can even pay for them. A press which is allowed to sink below a certain

standard of behaviour might be more dangerous than any weapon of war, even the atom bomb, in degrading society and indeed in pulling down the standards of even the higher newspapers. Having said this, I should also like to say that when we try to control the press, we enter upon dangerous ground and great care has to be taken not to misuse any power that might be given.

9. I cannot even now say how long our present session of Parliament will last. We had hoped that it would end by the 6th October. But that seems almost impossible now. Apart from the Press Bill, we have the highly important Industries Bill[7] and then we have to consider the Planning Commission's report and certain Delimitation Orders. We shall have to continue the session till the 11th of October or a day or two more.[8] There will, of course, be holidays in between because of *Dussehra*.

10. There will have to be another session of Parliament after the elections. This will be necessary for certain appropriation bills. That session may consider other matters also, but it is doubtful if any major piece of legislation can be considered or passsed by it, because elections will have taken place by then and this Parliament will be a dying one.

11. You must have followed with interest the proceedings taken by parliament in what is called the Mudgal case.[9]

7. The Industries (Development and Regulation) Bill passed by Parliament on 12 October 1951 received the President's assent on 31 October 1951. The Bill encompassing 37 basic industries envisaged setting up of Development Councils to deal with the problems of production and social responsibility of these industries, and a Central Advisory Council to advise the Government on issues relating to the exercise of control over their management.

8. The session ended on 16 October 1951.

9. On 8 June 1951, a special committee of Parliament concluded that H.G. Mudgal, Member of Parliament, had abused his position as Member of Parliament by promoting the interests of several business firms of Bombay and in his oral and written communications to the Prime Minister had concealed his connection with the Bombay Bullion Association. The committee held that his conduct was derogatory to the dignity of the House and recommended his suspension from Parliament.

Parliament viewed the conduct of Mr. Mudgal with extreme disfavour.[10] There has been a tendency in the past not only in Parliament but probably in the State Legislatures also, not to keep up to proper standards of behaviour. The Mudgal case is an example and a warning and there must be no laxity shown when any such matter arises. If once the reputation of our Legislatures goes down, then democracy itself will be in peril. Therefore, the reputation of these legislatures, as also of our services, must be strictly guarded and any misbehaviour should lead to enquiry and action.

12. While we have been carrying on debates and arguments in Parliament, an event of high significance has been taking place in Madhya Pradesh.[11] This is the walking tour of Acharya Vinoba Bhave. I am sure that this tour of his will yield as rich results as his tour of the Telengana area in Hyderabad.[12]

13. We had hoped and believed, for the wish was father to the thought, that this year's monsoon will be a good one after so many failures in the past. I am exceedingly sorry to say that our hopes have not been fulfilled and in many areas of India there has not been enough rain and the situation is serious. It is not serious in the sense of lack of food immediately, for we have imported large quantities of foodgrains. It is serious for the future because we cannot continue for long with this enormous

10. Accepting the committee's findings on 24 September, Nehru moved a resolution for Mudgal's expulsion from Parliament. But before the resolution could be passed, Mudgal tendered his resignation protesting that members were "not free" to express their views on the subject. On 25 September, the House passed an amended resolution, stating that Mudgal deserved expulsion from the House and that the terms of his letter of resignation constituted a contempt of the House.

11. Between 14 September and 13 November 1951, Vinoba Bhave covered a distance of 800 miles from Wardha to Delhi and *en route* received 21,000 acres of land as donation for distribution among the landless. The purpose of his walking tour was to change the "social order by effecting a psychological revolution in the minds of the people", and by *Bhoodan* (land gift) help to solve the agrarian problem of India.

12. See *ante*, p. 397.

gap in our own production and consumption. In particular, there has been a lack of rice. I think that we must try again, and to the utmost of our capacity, to vary our food habits and get people accustomed to eating other foods than those to which they have been normally accustomed.

14. In Assam, there have been heavy floods again[13] and that unfortunate province is faced by this new calamity. In large parts of Bombay and Saurashtra, famine is dreaded; in Uttar Pradesh, heavy loss has been caused. In some other parts of the country also, there has been this lack of rain and altogether the situation is a depressing one. In this connection, it seems to me that the State Governments should investigate modern methods for encouraging rainfall. This is not difficult, provided the clouds are there. If rain-clouds are not present, then, of course, it is exceedingly difficult and almost impossible. But I am told that if some rain-clouds are present, it is fairly easy by sprinkling them with some chemical powder from an aeroplane to induce the rain to come down. Anyhow, even the season of clouds is passing and we have to face the situation, however difficult it might be. It becomes necessary that all States in India should co-operate in this matter and such as have more should give of their abundance. Unfortunately, sometimes, there is a tendency to hold on to what one has got regardless of another's difficulty or misfortune.

15. There has been no great change in the Indo-Pakistan situation, although one does sense a lessening of tension or rather of talk of war. The fear of war has sensibly decreased on both sides. Recently, there has been a fresh outburst in Pakistan against India, no doubt because the Graham Report is expected to be out soon.[14] That is the Pakistan way. There have also been despatches in the British press, sent by their correspondents in India, which suggest that the United Nations

13. In the middle of September, the Brahmaputra and the Lohit rivers in Upper Assam were in spate and caused heavy damage to crops and livestock.

14. It was released on 16 October 1951.

should take strong measures on the Kashmir issue. Whether these represent individual flights of imagination of the correspondents or are a concerted effort, I do not know. We do not propose to say anything at present so long as the Graham Report does not come out. But I might make it perfectly clear that we do not propose to allow ourselves to be bullied by anybody and we will not permit any interference either from outside. We have gone pretty far in our desire for a peaceful settlement and to have a plebiscite in the Kashmir state. Any fair-minded person who sees what we have done will, I am sure, agree about our *bonafides* and our earnest desire for a peaceful settlement. We shall stand by that and go no further.

16. Reports from Eastern Pakistan continue to be most distressing. It is true that the influx of Hindus from Eastern Pakistan into India has gone down very greatly. In fact, it is hardly abnormal now. Many of those who came away have returned to their lands in East Bengal because of the difficulties of employment in India. Pressure of circumstances has sent them back, not any desire to do so. Living conditions for the minorities in East Bengal are such as to bear down upon them continuously and tend to squeeze them out.

17. There is another side to this picture also to which I have referred in a previous letter. Muslims continue to trek across the Rajasthan-Sind border from India to Pakistan. This has been a continuous process for a considerable time past and the average has worked out to about 450 a day. These people go without permits or other facilities. Why do they go? For a variety of reasons. Unemployment here and the hope of employment on the other side, fear and a general feeling of insecurity about the future. Most of the Muslims who are going in this way are of the lower middle class or the poorer classes. While we are perfectly justified in protesting against conditions in East Bengal, we must not forget that we cannot be satisfied with conditions in some parts of India, so far as Muslims are concerned. These conditions are largely the result of communal propaganda by

various organizations who try to frighten Muslims in India. The large number of refugees here are often easy victims of this propaganda, because it appears to them that they will profit if the Muslims go and leave their houses and lands. It is necessary, therefore, for all our State Governments to pay particular attention to this matter and to go all out to produce a sensation of security and fair treatment to our minorities. It brings little credit to us that we cannot act up to our professions.

18. The near approach of elections has galvanized all kinds of communal parties into fierce activity. This activity seldom concerns itself with any positive proposals. It is largely a denunciation of Government and more especially of what is called the 'appeasement' policy of Government towards Muslims. This kind of thing, adorned with an abundance of vulgar abuse, sometimes goes down with the crowd. I have, therefore, taken special pains to lay stress on the dangers of this vulgar and foolish approach and the inherent poison of communalism, which, if allowed free play, would break up India. I have always found a very ready response from the people I have addressed when the full facts are placed before them. Indeed, my optimism has grown because of this warm response that I have had from vast numbers of human beings, who have attended my meetings. These numbers are colossal. In Ludhiana,[15] the whole countryside seemed to have poured into that little town. That is particularly a Sikh area and I was happy to see vast numbers of stalwart Sikh farmers attending my meetings and lining the roadsides for miles. In Delhi also, every meeting I have addressed has been attended by over a hundred thousand. They have been quiet and orderly meetings, the people listening with attention, trying to understand the argument and appearing to agree with it.

19. Behind these communal bodies are the forces of every kind of social reaction. Some of the old ruling princes, deprived

15. Nehru began his election campaign at Ludhiana in Punjab on 30 September 1951 by giving a call to a gathering of about one lakh people for an "all-out war" on communalism.

of their powers but having enough money, the *jagirdars*, the big zamindars, and some of the big capitalists, support these communal bodies and talk loudly of a Hindu State or a Sikh State and of ancient Hindu culture. Behind this garb of ancient culture, they hide the narrowest acquisitiveness and reaction. Essentially, these communal bodies are fascist in ideology and technique. They indulge in violence and disturbance and try to terrorize people or appeal to their lowest instincts. This has seemed to me, therefore, the major evil today and I have consequently laid great stress upon it.

20. A recent incident has attracted some notice in the press. This is the resignation of Shri Achhru Ram[16] from the post of Custodian General.[17] Contrary to all practice and decorum, he has rushed to the press and justified himself against Government.[18] In doing so, he had condemned himself. He was appointed Custodian General of Evacuee Property, which meant that he was a trustee for the owners of that evacuee property. Instead he had functioned, according to his own saying, in the interests of those persons who are after acquiring this evacuee property. This strange reversal of roles has naturally affected his activities throughout, and Government have not viewed with favour much that he has done. Repeatedly, we drew his attention to this. Ultimately, we pointed out to him that he did not fit into this office and thereupon he resigned. The Custodian General's position was not that of a normal judicial authority, although he exercised quasi-judicial functions. The evacuee property laws are very

16. (1889-1975). Judge, Lahore High Court, 1943-47, and of East Punjab High Court, 1947-1949; member of the bench that heard Godse's appeal in Mahatma Gandhi's murder case; Custodian General of Evacuee Property, 1949-1951; later practised in the Supreme Court of India.

17. On 20 September 1951.

18. On 29 September, Achhru Ram alleged that there was great interference in the day-to-day functioning of his department by the people who wielded political influence. He added that both bribery and political influence were being used to circumvent the application of the laws regarding evacuee property.

abnormal and affect vast numbers of people. Essentially, they are the resultant of political conditions and have to be judged from the political angle. Government has to see that they do not bear down harshly upon any of its nationals, whatever their religion. They have in fact created a great deal of apprehension in the minds of many Muslims in India. Communal organizations have taken full advantage of this situation to carry on their vicious propaganda.

21. In Kashmir state, the elections to the Constituent Assembly are proceeding and will probably be over in Jammu within a few days. A very large number of these elections have been unopposed and the candidates of the National Conference have got in. In some foreign papers this led to the criticism that the elections were not fair and were a put-up job. Anyone who has been to Kashmir and seen things for himself, knows how untrue this allegation is. The fact of the matter is that the National Conference has become the symbol of freedom and progress to the people of the state. It has grown in power and popularity during the last two or three years and people naturally flock to it. Those who are opposed to it have not strength enough to do so in public. Only in Jammu, there has been stiff opposition and this has come from the Hindu communal elements, who very foolishly play into the hands of Pakistan, which they detest. This is a significant example of the communal approach to our problems which is prepared to cut off its head in order to spite somebody.

22. In Nepal, there have been dissensions in the Cabinet and a good deal of trouble and intrigue.[19] I am rather distressed about this state of drift and uncertainty there. We do not wish to interfere in any way, and yet we cannot remain silent spectators when harm is done. Apart from our interest in the

19. It was reported that the relations between the Nepali Congress and the Rana groups in the coalition Cabinet of ten members had again grown tense on the question of reforms which the Nepali Congress wished to introduce with speed.

welfare of the people of Nepal, our own security is involved in this matter. We are, therefore, taking keen interest in developments there.

23. The oil dispute in Iran has, as you know, become one of the major world issues.[20] We have tried our utmost to suggest a settlement by negotiation. There can be no doubt that the Iranians have suffered a great deal in the past and have smarted under many indignities. At the same time, we have felt that a settlement by compromise is obviously desirable and previous wrong cannot be righted by another wrong. We do not wish to interfere, but, where possible, we have informally given our friendly advice to the parties concerned.

24. Dr. Shahrir,[21] ex-Prime Minister of Indonesia, has been on a visit to Delhi[22] on his way back from Europe. He is an old friend who is always welcome and his visit here has given us an opportunity to discuss many problems.

25. Thakin Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, is likely to come to Delhi for consultations about the 22nd October. India and Burma were the two countries which adopted an identical policy in regard to the Japanese peace treaty. We shall discuss future steps in this matter as well as many other matters of common concern Recent developments in China and Tibet have raised new problems for both of us. Fortunately, as you know, our relations with the People's Government of China are good and we hope that a friendly settlement of any outstanding issues will be arrived at. I might mention that a strong cultural mission from China is coming to India towards the end of this

20. In September 1951, Britain rejected the Iranian proposals for resumption of oil negotiations and the Iranian Government consequently expelled the remaining 300 British oil technicians and took over the oil industry. On 1 October, Britain, with the support of the United States, took the issue to the United Nations.

21. For b.fn. see Vol.1, p. 246.

22. He came to Delhi from Karachi on 23 September 1951 on a fortnight's visit to India.

month.[23] They will be the guests of our Government and they will tour India in two parties, one consisting chiefly of scientists and the other of literary men and the like. I hope that if they visit your State, you will give them a warm welcome.

26. We have had a new addition to our Cabinet. Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda,[24] the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, has now become a Cabinet Minister at the Centre.[25] He continues his association with the Planning Commission. An existing member of the Cabinet, Dr. Ambedkar[26] has however intimated his desire to resign at the conclusion of this session because of ill health.

27. A recent letter received by me from the Chief Minister[27] of Saurashtra gives a very encouraging account of the revolutionary changes in land that have been brought about there in recent months. In Saurashtra there was feudalism in the land. All traces of feudalism so far as agriculture is concerned have been completely eliminated. This has been done largely by consent. Further steps are being taken now in regard to non-agricultural lands and debt redemption and the prevention of fragmentation of holding. Only recently every inch of land in Saurashtra was under a feudal lord; all this has

23. The mission led by Ting Si-Lin reached Calcutta on 28 October 1951.

24. (b. 1898). Congressman and trade union leader; Minister for Planning, 1951-52, for Planning, Labour and Employment, 1957-63, for Home Affairs, 1963-66; acted as Prime Minister for a few days in May 1964 and again in January 1966.

25. On 15 September 1951.

26. B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956). Harijan leader; member of the Viceroy's Council, 1942-46; Union Minister for Law, 1947-51; and one of the principal draftsmen of the Indian Constitution.

27. U.N. Dhebar (1905-1977). Chief Minister of Saurashtra, 1948-54; President of the Congress, 1957-59.

ended now.[28] I wish that in other States progress had been as good. In Jammu and Kashmir state, of course, as I have told you previously, there has also been a rapid and revolutionary change in the land system.[29]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

28 Following the recommendations of the Agrarian Reforms Commission of 1950, the Saurashtra Government passed three Acts between September 1951 and February 1952 by which the systems of intermediaries were abolished. Direct relations between the cultivators and the State were encouraged and the cultivators offered protection and fixed rents

29. By the legislation enacted on 22 October 1951, all land holdings in excess of 125 acres were confiscated for distribution among the tillers of the land to whom the proprietory rights not exceeding the limit of 20 acres per head were given. A resolution was also passed in the Kashmir Constituent Assembly on 31 March 1952 providing for the confiscation of large estates without payment of any compensation.

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New Delhi
21 October, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The writing of this letter has been delayed and it is going to be a brief one. You will appreciate, I am sure, the reasons for this delay. The Congress session is just over[1] and you will have received both my presidential address[2] there and the resolutions that we passed.

2. There are only three important resolutions, those dealing with foreign policy,[3] with anti-social and disruptive

1. On 19 October 1951.

2. In his presidential address on 18 October, Nehru called upon the Congressmen to pull themselves "from narrow grooves of thought and action," and become again "fighters for a cause and upholders of high principles." Stressing the need for eradicating communalism from the country, he described it as an "Indian version of fascism." While urging the importance of social justice and land reforms, Nehru called for first priority to the raising of food production. Referring to Kashmir, he said that his Government was committed to a plebiscite because "we are sure of its results."

3. Drafted by Nehru, the resolution referred to the Japanese peace treaty, the ceasefire negotiations in Korea, the dangers of rearmament, the functions of the U.N., and Indo-Pakistan relations. It endorsed the Government's foreign policy of avoidance of "any entanglement in military or other alliances which tend to divide the world into rival groups." On Kashmir, the resolution said that the Congress wished to have an early plebiscite and would welcome a peaceful settlement of Indo-Pakistan problems.

tendencies [4] and economic programme.[5] These three resolutions give a certain definiteness to the Congress outlook and programme today, which is also the Government's programme. The Congress session and what has gone before has helped to clear our thinking in India and there can be no doubt as to what the Congress stands for.

3. The outstanding event in the last few days has been the assassination of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan.[6] This tragic event evoked an immediate and widespread response in India and for the moment our controversies were forgotten. In Delhi, apart from feeling references on several occasions, a great public meeting was held[7] which was attended by the President and presided over by Shri Rajagopalachari. I am sure that this big-hearted reaction in India must have produced good results in Pakistan.

4. It is a little early perhaps to judge of the consequences of this assassination. The act itself need have no great significance, as it was probably that of an individual. There is no reason to think that there were others behind that individual. Nevertheless, the consequences of the act are bound to be far-reaching. Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan played a dominant role in Pakistan and his removal makes a difference. The new Prime Minister, Khwaja Nazimuddin,[8] is a temperate and moderate person and his appointment,[9] therefore, should

4. It reaffirmed the party's faith in the establishment of a secular State and condemned casteism and communalism as contrary to the true spirit of religion and the cultural traditions of India. The resolution reaffirmed that equality of rights and opportunities to every citizen irrespective of caste, creed or religion was the bedrock of India's policies.

5. The resolution welcomed the aims and objectives as laid down in the preamble of the first five-year plan. It stressed the need for self-sufficiency in food, underlined the importance of industrial development for creating opportunities for employment, and laid emphasis on the progressive extension of the public sector in industries, co-operative farming, encouragement to cottage industries and an equitable distribution of wealth.

6. He was assassinated in Rawalpindi on 16 October 1951.

7. On 17 October 1951.

8. For b. fn. see Vol.1, p.327.

9. On 17 October 1951.

be welcomed from this point of view. But there have been many currents below the surface in Pakistan and the sudden removal of the man who had more or less kept them in check might lead to these currents coming out on the surface.

5. There has been a good deal of trouble in the Frontier Province and the tribal areas.[10] Indeed, it is probable that internal conditions in the Frontier Province and these areas are more of a headache to Pakistan than even the Kashmir situation. So far as the latter is concerned, there has also been a good deal of internal conflict in the so-called 'Azad Kashmir' areas[11] between the two leaders, Ghulam Abbas and Ibrahim.

6. It is reported that Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan went to the Frontier Province to deal personally with this difficult situation. One of the objects of his visit was to settle the differences of Ghulam Abbas and Ibrahim. He never met them because he was shot and killed a little before the appointed hour of meeting.

7. The conspiracy trial against a number of high officers in the Pakistan Army, which has been going on for some time, has also been a disturbing factor in Pakistan, more especially in the Army.[12]

8. Dr. Graham has just presented his report.[13] It is going to be considered by the Security Council in Paris by the end of this

10. Considerable tension was reported on 4 October in Ting state situated between Kashmir and Afghanistan following the state's forcible annexation by Pakistan. There was also large-scale migration from Chitral to Afghanistan. The Prime Minister of Afghanistan then declared open support to the people fighting for Pakhtoonistan in the frontier areas.

11. Rivalry between Ghulam Abbas, the head of the 'Azad Kashmir' Government, and Sardar Ibrahim, his predecessor, led to the latter planning to form a parallel government.

12. See *ante*, pp. 359-360.

13. Graham's report, presented to the Security Council on 18 October 1951, recommended to the Security Council to call on both countries to improve relations; renew efforts to demilitarize the state; and instruct the U.N. representative to continue negotiations and report back within six weeks.

month.[14] Presumably, Dr. Graham's request will be agreed to and he will get another six weeks to carry on as a mediator.[15] We shall probably have to send some people to Paris when this matter is taken up. As you will have noticed, Dr. Graham confined himself during his discussions here and in his report to what is called "demilitarization". He did not touch other issues. On this subject some progress was made and we went a good way to come to some agreement on this narrow issue of withdrawal of armed forces. Indeed, we went to the farthest limit consistent with safety. Even so, the gap between the position of Pakistan and that of ours is still difficult to bridge. If it is bridged, which is unlikely, then other important questions arise. It would thus be seen that even an acceptance of Dr. Graham's proposals by both Governments does not by itself end the dispute.

9. Meanwhile the elections to the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir state have been concluded[16] and the Assembly will meet by the end of this month.[17] It will thus overlap somewhat with the Security Council. These Assembly elections have been criticized because a very large number of them were unopposed.[18] As a matter of fact, the position of the National Conference was so strong that it could not be successfully challenged. Where it was challenged, the opponent of the National Conference had his security forfeited. The coming of the Constituent Assembly immediately introduces a dynamic factor in the Kashmir situation.

14. Graham had suggested simultaneous demilitarization but India was prepared to do so only after Pakistan had withdrawn.

15. On 10 November 1951, the Security Council adopted a joint Anglo-American resolution instructing Graham to continue his efforts to obtain the agreement of the parties on a plan for effecting the demilitarization of Kashmir and to report to the Council within six weeks.

16. On 15 October 1951.

17. On 31 October 1951.

18. From 73 out of 75 constituencies, the National Conference candidates were returned unopposed; the remaining two were returned by defeating independent candidates.

10. The situation in the Middle Eastern countries has become explosive. The Iran oil dispute has led to no final result yet, but it is clear that the U.K. has suffered great loss and prestige. Indeed, we see now the collapse of the British power in the Middle East. I must say that British policy there has been singularly inept, both in the past and the present. It has not taken into account the tremendous forces of the new nationalism in these Middle Eastern countries. All this represents another shift in the balance of power.

11. Shri Panikkar has just arrived in Delhi[19] for consultation and we shall take full advantage of this visit. It is important that we should know what the new China is and in what direction it is going. It seems clear that the People's Government of China has strengthened and consolidated itself and is a very popular one. For the first time, China possesses a strong Central Government whose decrees run even to Sinkiang and Tibet. Our own relations with China are definitely friendly. China's cultural mission will be coming to India soon and will spend about six weeks here.

12. Thakin Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, has come to Delhi for consultations.[20] We welcome his visit as we attach importance to our friendly relations with Burma.

13. Parliament is at last over. The session ended on the 16th of this month.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

19. On 16 October 1951.

20. He was in Delhi from 21 to 30 October 1951. He described his visit as undertaken primarily to strengthen the Indo-Burmese treaty of friendship.

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New Delhi
1 November, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

The approach of the general elections and of the initial preparations for them are involving an amount of work and worry which is becoming almost a nightmare. This has come at a time of developing crisis in various parts of the world which demands constant attention. One dominant wish overshadows, for the moment, almost everything else in my mind, and of course that wish will be realized. This is for the next hundred days or so to pass and the elections to be a thing of the past. Inevitably, the hundred days will pass, though the end of them will not see an end of our problems.

2. I confess that I find this electioneering business most depressing and I wonder sometimes if this particular form of democracy cannot be improved upon—something that brings out the undesirable features in a man's nature, his desire for power and position, his acquisitiveness and wish for self-advancement even at the cost of others, his losing all perspective of the larger issues and judging everything by some petty and personal electoral victory. These individual reactions apart, a serious development is the importance that caste groups are likely to play in the elections. It was in view of this that the last Congress session[1] passed a special resolution about anti-social tendencies.[2] We shall have to face these stoutly and without compromising with them.

3. I still think, as I have said on many occasions, that the most dangerous development today is that of communalism and

1. See *ante*, p. 514.
2. See *ante*, p. 515.

separatism. Some people have criticized me because of this and declared that there is no such thing as communalism in India. That is a thing of the past.[3] Most of these critics happen to function in communal organizations today and themselves play an exceedingly narrow-minded and communal role. It is understandable that they do not find any fault with themselves and their own activities. They could only see the communalism of some other group, and not their own.

4. The fact is that the partition and its consequences, while it largely pushed out Muslim communalism and sent it to Pakistan, where it flourished exceedingly, also resulted in encouraging Hindu and Sikh communalism in India and many other separatist tendencies. These flourished in the name of nationalism and culture. They demanded loudly what they called strong action against Pakistan, which included war, and criticized governmental policy as one of appeasement of Pakistan. These people, most of whom had done little in the struggle for India's freedom, become her aggressive champions—their India being limited of course to those who agreed with them.

5. This narrow-minded upsurge spread the spirit of separatism in various forms throughout the country and imperilled the national unity which it had been the aim of the Congress to build up and which it had largely succeeded in doing. The Sikhs demanded a separate State or at least a separate province. Demands for linguistic provinces became more vociferous, regardless of certain basic facts and agreements. Caste groups began to think more of themselves than of any larger national issue. Even the Congress was

3. Syama Prasad Mookerjee said on 21 October 1951 that "there is no communalism in India today except the new policy of Muslim appeasement which has been started by Mr. Nehru and his friends for winning their votes at the forthcoming elections. We have provincialism and other types of class or caste differences in the country today. The cry of communalism raised by Mr. Nehru is to side-track the real issues now before the nation."

affected by these tendencies and many in the Congress succumbed to them.

6. We are told that communalism and separatism have no significance and that the real problem of India is that of poverty and unemployment and the like. Of course, the primary problem of India is economic and everything else has second place. But in order to tackle that problem effectively, there must be some unity of conception and effort. If separatist and sectarian ideas increase, they make it difficult to tackle that principal problem. If chaotic conditions exist in some parts of the country, then the energy of the nation is largely absorbed in dealing with them, and other matters, however important, become secondary. Therefore, it is of primary importance to scotch and try to put an end to these communal and separatist tendencies in order to go ahead with the primary problem of India's economic ills. The two are interrelated and affect one another and, to some extent, have to be tackled together. But if we allow the communal spirit to grow, then inevitably social reaction will also grow and prevent economic progress.

7. I can understand these criticisms from non-Congressmen, who have had some communal background in the past. But it amazes me that any Congressman should so mislead himself and others as to think that we can ignore these dangerous tendencies. Because we partly ignored them, they grew and cast a shadow all over the country and created an inner weakness in the Congress itself. A change has come now because of a straightforward and frontal approach to this problem and most people who had allowed themselves to drift in a wrong direction, have pulled themselves up. There should be or can be no relaxation in this effort. I would like to repeat that it is better to lose elections than to give up something which has been the basis of our national movement and that is the foundation of all progress in India.

8. The election campaign, which is gradually taking shape all over the country, largely consists in attacks on our Governments

and on the Congress. Every party has the right to criticize or condemn present-day Governments but, in reading these criticisms, the dominant reaction is of their emptiness and barrenness. Instead of any positive approach to our problems, the easy and negative way of condemnation is adopted, and even this usually takes the form of personal attacks, sometimes bordering on indecency, and utter falsehoods about the Governments.

9. If India had something in the nature of war-lords fighting for mastery over their respective areas, then the issue would have been clear enough. We have not got those war-lords, but we have something rather similar to them in the ideological sphere and we have to deal with them lest they delude the people and injure the country's cause by false slogans. Whatever misguided people may say or do, it is essential that we should avoid sinking to a level of personal attack during these elections.

10. Much has happened during these last ten days since I wrote to you. The food situation has grown worse and the lack of rain in Gujarat, Madhya Bharat, Saurashtra, Rajasthan and some parts of Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab, has darkened our future prospects. In Pakistan, the assassination of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan has led to certain important changes in the Government.[4] We have had a visit[5] from Thakin Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma. It is always a pleasure to have him here, for he is an unusual type of political leader, who thinks and acts in a straight manner. Our meetings are not only, I hope, good for both of us, but have a larger significance in cementing the good relations of India and Burma. The Chinese

4. Ghulam Mahomed, the Finance Minister, became the Governor-General and Khwaja Nazimuddin, the Prime Minister and Defence Minister, Chaudhuri Mohammed Ali, the Secretary-General of Pakistan Government, the Finance Minister, and Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, the Industries Minister.

5. From 21 to 30 October 1951.

cultural delegation is in Delhi now [6] and has had a warm welcome. It consists of eminent representatives in science, letters, music, economics and other subjects. They are at the beginning of their all-India tours and will visit, as you know, many States.[7] In the long perspective of history, it is of the highest importance that the two great countries of China and India should understand each other.

11. There is in the world today an amazing lack of mutual understanding. Foreign affairs are governed by slogans. Is a country communist or non-communist; is it in this bloc or that? The test is whether it falls in a set line laid down for it or keeps away. My doxy is orthodoxy; other doxies are heterodoxy. It is amazing how narrow national viewpoints are becoming.

12. It is with regret that I have to inform you that Shri Rajagopalachari is leaving Government.[8] I could not induce him to stay any longer and had to agree to his oft-expressed desire for rest. We shall miss him greatly and the burdens that I have to carry will increase. I am sure that the nation cannot accept his retirement for long. I have invited Dr. Kailas Nath Katju,[9] Governor of Bengal, to join the Central Cabinet and I am glad to say that he has accepted it.[10] I intend asking him to take up both the Home and Law portfolios. Normally these two portfolios should not be joined together, as to some extent, each is a check on the other. But for the relatively brief period till the elections are over and the new Parliament meets, this arrangement seemed to me most convenient. Any other arrangement would have somewhat upset existing Ministries.

6. See *ante*, pp. 492 and 512.

7. The delegation visited Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

8. His resignation came into effect from 5 November 1951.

9. (1887-1968). Lawyer and Congressman of Allahabad; Minister in U.P., 1937-39 and 1946-47; Governor of Orissa, 1947-48, and of West Bengal, 1948-51; Union Minister for Home Affairs and Law, 1951-52, Home Affairs, 1952-55, and Defence, 1955-57; Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, 1957-62.

10. On 5 November 1951.

13. Our Ambassador in Washington, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, has decided to resign with a view to standing for election to Parliament.[11] She has been out of India for many years and it was her earnest desire to return home. I could not say no to her, although her departure from Washington creates a difficult problem for us. She has been one of our outstanding successes in our diplomatic work and it will be difficult to replace her. She, in common with some of our other Ambassadors, has often been criticized in Parliament and outside. It is not possible for her, and it was not easy for us, to discuss the work of our Ambassadors in public. But the fact has been that she occupied one of our most difficult posts during a critical period, with great distinction, and served India well. Her popularity in the United States has been something phenomenal. Whenever the question of her return to India has been mentioned, the State Department of Washington has expressed its regret and its desire that she should continue.

14. Another foreign mission of ours is at present without an Ambassador. This is Peking, also a difficult and delicate assignment. Shri K.M. Panikkar has recently come back to India after three hard years in Peking. During these years he has played a very distinguished and outstanding role and done good service to India and to Indo-Chinese understanding. I hope that it may be possible for him to go back to China for a brief period at least. Meanwhile, he is joining our delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

15. Our Foreign Service has grown up rapidly and it was inevitable that it should lack experience. It is often criticized and sometimes the criticism is justified. But, by and large, our Ambassadors abroad stand out among the other members of the diplomatic corps and the reputation of India's foreign missions is high. We have had trouble in some places and sometimes the younger members of our missions have not behaved as they should. The new environment has swept them

11. She resigned on 15 November 1951.

away. Another difficulty is a proper adjustment between administrative efficiency and political understanding, which is so necessary during this critical period of the world. Most people imagine that an Ambassador's life is one of parties and ceremonial functions. It is true that this relic of old times continues. But the other and far more important part of his work does not come to the surface and is little known. Ultimately it is not the parties that count, but the political understanding of India's policies as well as of those of the country to which the Ambassador is accredited. He or she has to reflect India's policy clearly and firmly and yet to retain the goodwill of the other country.

16. Recently, the Auditor-General,[12] in his report to Parliament,[13] made some observations which have been splashed in the press and led some people to believe that our foreign missions are in a bad way. As a matter of fact, the Auditor-General spoke well of many of our missions abroad and criticized in rather strong terms one particular mission,[14] where accounts, etc., had not been properly kept. We had ourselves felt unhappy about this matter and it was at our instance that the Auditor-General went there.[15] Even before his report came to us, we took action and changed a large part of the staff there. The head of the Legation[16] died before the enquiry was over. There was no charge or proof of any loss of money, but there were certain grave irregularities and we took strong action. We propose to take such action wherever and whenever needed, whether in the case of individuals or of a mission abroad.

12. V. Narahari Rao (1893-1969). Joined Audit and Accounts Service, 1917; Secretary, Finance Department, 1946-48; Comptroller and Auditor-General of India, 15 August 1948 to 14 August 1954.

13. The report was laid on the table of the House on 16 October 1951.

14. Rao had referred to some irregularities and the misuse of public funds at the legation in Berne.

15. In September 1950.

16. Dhirajlal Desai. For b. fn. see Vol.1, p.317.

17. We have had to deal, during the past few days, with certain developments in Nepal[17] which were coming in the way of ordered progress there. Our Ambassador in Kathmandu[18] was summoned for consultation. He has now gone back and we hope that some of the difficulties that face Nepal will be eased in the near future.

18. The Foreign Minister of Australia, Mr. R.G. Casey,[19] who used to be Governor of Bengal at one time, paid a brief visit to New Delhi on his way to the United Nations.[20] The visit of Commonwealth statesmen is always welcome because it enables us to exchange ideas and keep in touch with each other. Unfortunately, newspapers often think that some secret intrigues are afoot whenever Prime Ministers or Foreign Ministers meet. And so a report suddenly came out that some new and secret move was being taken by India in regard to the Kashmir question. This bright idea struck someone because he saw one of our Foreign Office Secretaries[21] travelling in the same aircraft to Karachi with Mr. Casey. This was pure accident and our Secretary was paying a routine visit to Karachi for purposes of inspection. His going there had nothing to do with either Mr. Casey or with Kashmir.

19. The Constituent Assembly of Kashmir began its first sessions yesterday. Probably it will adjourn after a few days and after appointing a number of committees. This Assembly contains a solid bloc of representatives of the National Conference under Sheikh Abdullah's leadership. Naturally it must reflect the views of the National Conference in regard to

17. See *ante*, pp. 510-511.

18. C.P.N. Singh. For b.fn. see Vol. 1, p.361.

19. (1890-1976). Governor of Bengal, 1944-46; Foreign Minister of Australia, 1951-60; Governor-General, 1965-69.

20. From 25 to 28 October 1951.

21. B.N. Chakravarti (1904-1976). Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of India, Nanking, February to June 1948; head of the Indian Liaison Mission, Tokyo, 1948-49; Secretary, Commonwealth Relations, 1951-52; Ambassador to the Netherlands, 1952-54; High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, 1955-56 and to Canada, 1960-62; India's Permanent Representative to U.N., 1962-65; Governor of Haryana, 1967-76.

the Kashmir problem. These views are in favour of accession to India but, it must be remembered, that we have clearly stated that any expression of views in the Constituent Assembly will not come in the way of the Security Council's consideration of the Kashmir problem. We have made certain commitments and we must stand by them. The elections to the Constituent Assembly have proved beyond doubt what the people of Jammu and Kashmir, or, at any rate, the people of the areas under the control of the Jammu and Kashmir Government at present, think. It has been an overwhelming victory for Sheikh Abdullah and his National Conference. While this is clear to anyone, still we are perfectly willing and indeed anxious to have a plebiscite if satisfactory conditions are laid down for it. The frequent criticism in the foreign press and elsewhere that we are fighting shy of a plebiscite because we are afraid of its result, is completely without foundation. The sooner a proper plebiscite is held the better for us because it will finally solve this question which has troubled us for so long. We have no doubt as to the result of that plebiscite. But, as I have said above, the plebiscite can only be satisfactory if the conditions under which it is held are proper. Dr. Graham's report [22] is likely to be considered by the Security Council early this month in Paris.[23]

20. The general elections in the United Kingdom [24] have resulted, not unexpectedly, in a victory for the Conservative Party though the margin is not great.[25] Some people in India, remembering past history, think that Mr. Churchill and his colleagues will create difficulties for India.[26] I do not think this apprehension is justified. As an independent country India is

22. See *ante*, p. 506.

23. It was considered on 10 November 1951.

24. Held on 25 October 1951.

25. The Conservative Party's lead over the Labour Party was 27 but its lead over all parties combined was 18 only.

26, For example, *Amrit Bazar Patrika* in an article published on 28 October wrote: "It is no simple change of parties where India is concerned. Churchill and Attlee have been poles apart on India all through their lives. So have their parties." On 27 October 1951, Acharya Narendra Deva also expressed his fears as to "how Churchill would behave now."

not directly concerned with changes of Governments in the United Kingdom. Naturally we are deeply interested in them because of the larger consequences that flow from any major change in policy in the United Kingdom. We have also close relations in many matters. But whatever the past of the Conservative Party might have been in regard to India, they are realists and they cannot undo what has happened. Indeed, many of the leaders of the Conservative Party have assured me of this in the past. More particularly Mr. Eden,[27] the Foreign Secretary and Lord Ismay,[28] the Commonwealth Secretary, have, I believe, friendly feelings towards India. Lord Ismay was here with Lord Mountbatten[29] and Mr. Eden paid a brief visit to New Delhi[30] some time ago and was pleasantly surprised with what he found here. He addressed our Members of Parliament also.[31] It is possible, of course, that in some matters British policy may not be wholly agreeable to us. Even the Labour Government's foreign policy was not always pleasing to us. We have to deal with these matters as they arise. I think it is unbecoming and improper for us to condemn a foreign government or to express apprehensions as to what it might do to India.

21. There is some talk of a conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in London. This is vague still and nothing has

27. Anthony Eden (1897-1977). Foreign Secretary, 1935-38; member, War Cabinet, 1939-45; Foreign Secretary, 1951-55; Prime Minister, 1955-57.

28. Hastings Lionel, first Lord Ismay (1887-1965). Military Secretary to the Viceroy, 1931-33; Chief of Staff to Winston Churchill, 1940-45; Chief of Staff to Mountbatten in India, March to November1947; Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, 1951-52; Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 1952-57.

29. From March to November 1947.

30. From 21 to 24 March 1949.

31. Addressing the Members of Parliament on 22 March 1949, Eden stated that while India's decision to remain in Commonwealth was hers, he would like to assure them that the "closer and more intimate the relationship you may feel able to establish with us and with the sister nations of our Commonwealth, the happier we shall be." He also assured India of "the immense fund of goodwill" that existed in Britain for her.

been proposed. Should such a conference be held, it will, of course, be very difficult and hardly possible for me to attend it, till the elections are over at least.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
30 November, 1951

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to you what is called my fortnightly letter after a full month. I am very sorry at this lapse on my part. I have tried to be more or less regular in the past but events have rather overwhelmed me during this past month. I suppose the next six weeks or so will be equally difficult. You will understand my predicament and forgive me.

2. A great deal of my time has been taken up by work connected with the elections. There has been the business of selecting candidates (and there are over 4,000 of them to be so selected) and then touring. The process of selection of candidates has been a most depressing business. I am quite convinced that the procedure we had laid down for inviting applications and then appeals, has been a wrong procedure. It has given rise to charges and counter-charges and an attempt on the part of many of the applicants to run down their rivals. The most extraordinary charges have often been made. It was obviously impossible for the selection committee to convert itself into some kind of a judicial tribunal and decide on the many unsavoury issues that were raised. We gave a great deal of time to this and worked early and late, but it was manifestly impossible to carry on enquiries into the charges. We had to decide with the data before us, keeping in mind the recommendations of the Pradesh Congress Committee. The result of all this has been, to my mind, highly unsatisfactory from every point of view. A lot of mud has been thrown about indiscriminately and it is difficult to avoid some of it sticking.

In the circumstances, it is inevitable that mistakes should be made and many should be disappointed and even have a sense of unfair treatment.

3. We shall have to devise some better method in future. Of course, this process of selection of candidates on the eve of elections is bad. This should be done much earlier. As it is, the selection has been made sometimes a day or two before nominations, and then difficulties have arisen if the nomination paper was rejected or some other confusion arose. Many who would have made excellent candidates, have preferred not to stand at all because of this atmosphere of charge and counter-charge.[1] Indeed, politics in India, as perhaps elsewhere, gradually tends to eliminate the sensitive person. Only the tough survive.

4. Touring has been an exhausting business for me and yet it has also been exhilarating. I confess that the sight of vast numbers of friendly people cheered me greatly and gave me strength. I am used to large crowds but I have seldom seen such numbers as I saw during my last tour. I spent five days on this tour – half a day in Bombay, about a day in Madras, and two-and-a-half days in Travancore-Cochin. During these four days, I must have addressed at public meetings or met at roadside gatherings about forty lakhs of people. There were several meetings a day and the attendance at the larger meetings often amounted to several hundred thousands. These colossal numbers obviously have some significance. Indeed I had the sensation of vast movements of multitudes of human beings, almost like some human earthquake or flood. They looked with kindly and affectionate eyes and I was filled with emotion.

5. Politics are in a peculiarly fluid state in India at present. To some extent this is natural. This is our first test on a colossal scale after the attainment of independence. The old objectives

1. Sri Prakasa and Purushottam Das Tandon had expressed their disinclination to contest the elections.

change and new urges and apprehensions fill the people. Innumerable parties clamour for attention and seek election for their candidates. Many of these parties are mushroom growths. Some are older ones and have importance. Among the older parties is the Socialist Party which appears to have some strength in a few States. The Communist Party hardly counts in India as a whole but in some small areas they have a considerable following, chiefly because of local reasons. They are much more demonstrative than others. In the north of India, the Bharatiya Jan Sangh[2] is playing an important part. It is a new party under its present name but it is a direct offspring of existing communal organizations.[3] Then there are a number of local or provincial parties,[4] the Congress towering above all these other parties, and attempts are being made for all kinds of combinations between them. There are a large number of Independents standing.

6. Probably many of these mushroom parties will disappear after the elections. The others will have to organize themselves anew with the experience gained, and gradually our political life will become less fluid.

7. You will remember that the President issued a directive to the Mysore Government in regard to a certain case that is going on in the courts there.[5] The Mysore Government having agreed to get a judge from Bombay for this trial, there was no further

2. Established in New Delhi on 21 October 1951 with Syama Prasad Mookerjee as its first president.

3. Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

4. In all 77 political organizations took part in the elections. Of these 8 functioned on an all-India basis, 14 were regional, and the rest were local in character.

5. The President issued the directive under Article 371 of the Constitution on a petition of the accused for immediate transfer to a Sessions Court in Bombay or Madras of a criminal case of conspiracy and attempt at murder of the Chief Justice of Mysore. This directive was withdrawn on 8 December 1951.

necessity for the President's directive and this has been withdrawn.

8. In Nepal, a new Cabinet has been formed.[6] From all accounts, this Cabinet is a stronger and more representative one than the last, and for the first time, there is a non-Rana Prime Minister.[7] In recent developments in Nepal, our advice has been frequently sought and I am glad to say that a great deal of attention has been paid to it. Many difficulties still continue in Nepal but on the whole the outlook is better than it was.

9. The failure of the rains in some parts of the country has made the food position more difficult. Fortunately there have been recent rains in Madras and in some parts of Bombay and these have somewhat improved the situation. Nevertheless, the situation continues to be grave and the hope we nourished that we would be able to carry forward a considerable quantity of foodgrains to the next year is rather dim now. There has been reference in the newspapers to widespread famine next year. I do not think that this is at all a correct appraisal of the situation. It is perfectly true that crops have failed in parts of Rajasthan, Ajmer-Merwara, Gujarat, Saurashtra and some districts of the Punjab, Madhya Bharat and U.P. Nevertheless, the situation is not bad as it is painted. In other parts of India crops have been good.

10. The Kashmir issue came up again before the Security Council and they have decided to give another six weeks to Dr. Graham. Dr. Graham is now carrying on conversations with

6. M.P. Koirala became on 16 November 1951 the Prime Minister of Nepal in a cabinet of twelve ministers in which the Nepali Congress had a majority of eight. This ended the domination of the Ranas.

7. M.P. Koirala (b. 1912). Founder-member, Nepal National Congress, 1946; President, Nepali Congress Party, 1950; Prime Minister of Nepal and Minister of General Administration and Foreign Affairs, 1951-52, and 1953-55; founded Rashtriya Praja Party, 1952; Ambassador to the United States and Permanent Representative at the United Nations, 1962-64.

Shri B.N. Rau and Mr. Zafrullah Khan. As the main question being discussed is one of demilitarization, we have sent Major-General Thimayya[8] and Brigadier Manekshaw[9] to advise our representative. Thus far nothing very promising has emerged. Meanwhile, in Kashmir, steady progress is made. The Constituent Assembly met and after appointing a number of committees[10] adjourned to meet probably in April next.

11. In Egypt, a difficult situation has arisen because of the assumption by the King[11] of the additional title of King of Sudan.[12] The Egyptian Government is apparently insisting on Ambassadors presenting their credentials to the King of Egypt and Sudan. This means a recognition of the new title and thereby of Egypt's claims on the Sudan. It seems hardly proper to do so in this indirect and rather casual way. We do not, therefore, propose to take any such steps. We have at present no Ambassador there.

Probably we shall not send any Ambassador for some time until the situation clears up more. We shall keep a Charge d' Affaires in Cairo till then.

8. Lt. Gen. K.S. Thimayya (1906-1965). Joined the Indian Army, 1926; Commander, Indian troops in Kashmir, 1948-50; Chairman, Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea, 1953; Chief of the Army Staff, 1957-61

9. Field Marshal S.H.F.J. Manekshaw (b. 1914). Director of military operations in Kashmir, 1948-52; G.O.C.-in-C., Western Command, 1963-64, and Eastern Command, 1964-69; Chief of the Army Staff, June 1969-January 1973; conferred the rank of Field Marshal, 1973.

10. The Assembly was inaugurated on 31 October 1951 and appointed committees to decide on the question of compensation to dispossessed landlords, Fundamental Rights and the Basic Principles.

11. Fouad Farouk (1920-1965). King of Egypt from 1936 till his abdication in July 1952.

12. With the approval of the Egyptian Parliament, King Farouk was declared the King of Egypt and Sudan on 15 November 1951.

12. I am glad to inform you that our Railways Ministry has arrived at an agreement [13] with the All India Railwaymen's Federation regarding the machinery for settlement of disputes.

13. About two weeks ago, I paid a brief visit to Himachal Pradesh.[14] It was very pleasant to go to the Kulu and Kangra valleys and I met with an enthusiastic reception everywhere. But wherever I went, there was a cry for more roads, more schools, more post offices and other amenities. The hunger for learning was surprising and sometimes little boys under ten would walk as much as fifteen miles a day to go to school. The greatest problem of these mountain valleys is that of communications. Once proper roads are built they would become much more accessible and would develop fairly rapidly.

14. The Sindri Fertilizer Factory has begun production of ammonium sulphate.[15] The amount produced will be progressively increased during the next few months.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

13. It was agreed on 10 November 1951 to constitute a permanent three-tier negotiating machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and the workers.

14. From 15 to 17 November 1951.

15. Production started in the factory at Sindri in Bihar from 31 October 1951.

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New Delhi
7 January, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

There has been another gap in these fortnightly letters and I fear they tend to become monthly. I hope, however, to revert to a fortnightly soon.

2. As you must know, I have been touring about incessantly. I have visited many parts of India from the Himalayas to the extreme south and from the north-east to the west. I must have created some kind of a record in this respect. It was not possible for me to go everywhere and, regretfully, I had to say no to many places. But I have been to nearly all our States, though my visits to some of them have been very brief indeed. I am particularly sorry that I could not visit Tamil Nad except for a day in Madras. In Malabar also, I could only go for one brief meeting at Cannanore.

3. I am going out again tomorrow, this time to Saurashtra, Kutch and Ajmer. After a brief interval, I shall go to Uttar Pradesh for a few days. This will end my touring on January 21st. That indeed is the last day possible for this, as elections will be over in most States by then and will begin in Uttar Pradesh soon after.[1] In a sense, I shall have visited all the States, except Manipur, Tripura and Coorg.

4. Apart from the number of places visited by me the number of people who have come to my meetings has been extraordinary and beyond any previous experience. Quite a large number of my meetings have had an audience of 100,000 or more, some have gone up to 200,000 or 300,000. One

1. From 22 January 1952.

meeting held on the Calcutta *Maidan*[2] was variously estimated to have had an audience of over half a million or about a million. I imagine that I have actually addressed directly, during the past five or six weeks, at least fifteen million people and possibly nearly twenty millions. This does not include many whom I passed by the wayside. By the time I have finished this touring, I will have come into some kind of direct contact with nearly ten per cent of India's vast population.

5. Many friends express concern at the hectic and nomadic life that I have been leading recently. They ask me if it does not tire me out. Of course, it is tiring, but, as a matter of fact, I have found it very exhilarating. The mere fact of coming into contact in this way with vast numbers of our people, who are full of affection, is an overpowering experience which I can never forget. As I rushed about from place to place, the varied panorama of India passed before my eyes and each place recalled to my mind some fragment of our history. So the touring enriched me in addition to bringing me nearer to the millions of our people. I sensed a feeling of deep kinship with them and my faith in them grew. The realization came upon me, as it had come in the past also sometimes, that it was more important to share this feeling of kinship than to approach them merely with logical arguments, though the logical approach is of course necessary. But logic by itself can be very barren and may not take us far. It is awareness and appreciation of each other that counts. I felt overwhelmed at the abundance of affection shown to me, in spite of the obvious complaints and disabilities which people suffer from. Given the right approach, the reaction of the Indian people, as of any other people, is good. The question came to my mind repeatedly how we can produce this reaction for constructive effort in India. It can be done if we know how to do it not by distant advice but rather by associating ourselves with the work.

2. On 1 January 1952.

6. Some slight indication of the results of the elections can be obtained already,[3] but we shall have to wait for some time longer before the picture is at all definite. Actually the full and final results will not be available till the end of February. This means that the elections for the Upper Houses will have to take place in March[4] and the Presidential election will be held in the first half of April.[5] The new Parliament cannot meet before the end of April or the beginning of May at the earliest.[6]

7. Because of the provisions of our Constitution and also for other valid reasons, we cannot have such a long gap period between two sessions of Parliament. We have, therefore, to have a meeting of the old Parliament some time earlier to consider the provisional budget and some other important matters. We are fixing the 5th February for the opening day of the next Parliamentary session. This will probably last a month. We shall avoid taking up any controversial measure during this session because it would not be proper for the expiring Parliament to deal with major matters on which there is a difference of opinion. Our agenda for Parliament will, therefore, be confined to the budget, to various ordinances, and to some other important matters. The notification regarding the Punjab is expiring about the 8th of February. It is manifest that we cannot have a meeting of the new Punjab Assembly by that time. Therefore, we shall have to extend this period of the notification till it becomes feasible to have a Ministry in the Punjab. It was this necessity that made us fix the date of the next session of Parliament early in February. Otherwise we might have had it a little later.

3. While the Congress Party was leading in Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh, it was facing a tough opposition from Socialists, Communists and their allies in Madras, Travancore-Cochin and Hyderabad, and from Ganatantra Parishad in Orissa.

4. The election for 200 seats in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) took place on 27 March 1952.

5. In fact, the election of the Vice-President and the President took place on 24 April and 6 May 1952 respectively.

6. The new Parliament met on 13 May 1952.

8. Elections inevitably give rise to arguments which sometimes become quite passionate. This leads to ill-will. I hope that after the elections are over, we shall all make a special effort to get over this ill-will and try to get as much co-operation as possible from all groups in building up the new India. While political differences must necessarily remain, there is no reason why we should cling to old controversies and come in each other's way all the time. Whether we win or lose, we have to carry on, in our different capacities, the nation's work. All our people have to learn this essential feature of democracy. On the whole, thus far, the elections have been peaceful and well-organized.

9. Because of my incessant touring, I regret that I have not been able to keep in an intimate touch with developments as I normally do and should have done. Many things have happened during this past month, and the general situation in the world has not improved. In Korea, the ceasefire talks have encountered what appears to be an insurmountable barrier[7] and the prospect of peace there has receded. In Europe, though there is no near prospect of war, the tension appears to become worse. It centres round Germany and the questions of German rearmament and German unity have become of vital importance. There is a good deal of difference of opinion about the constitution of a European army.[8] The U.K., after encouraging this concept, has hesitated to accept it with all its

7. On 27 November, the U.N. and the Communist forces agreed on a ceasefire line if armistice was signed within 30 days. But despite an extension of this time-limit, both sides failed to come to any decision in regard to the exchange of prisoners, repairs of air-fields during armistice, and the composition of parties for final negotiations.

8. Six West European countries (France, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg and the Netherlands) at their meeting in Paris from 27 to 30 December 1951 agreed to the creation of a "Supranational army" by a gradual supercession of the national armies, and also by involving the West German forces.

implications.[9] On the future of Germany, one might say that the issue of war and peace depends. To some extent, the same argument applies to the rearmament of Japan in the Far East.

10. The international situation has been powerfully affected by the developments in the Middle East, more particularly in Iran[10] and Egypt.[11] In both places there is an impasse. Apart from the merits of the questions that have arisen, the significance of the Middle East today lies in the growth of an intense nationalism. This has upset many of the calculations of the Great Powers, more particularly in regard to Middle Eastern defence.[12] The U.S.S.R. are obviously pleased at the turn events have taken in the Middle East, for this weakens their adversaries. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is at present in Washington to discuss all these various problems.[13]

9. On 11 August 1950, the Council of Europe adopted a resolution, suggested by Winston Churchill, for setting up of a European army. On 28 November 1951, the British representative to the Council of Europe stated that Britain could never envisage participation in a European federation on account of its vital interests in other regions of the world but added that a European army would be a very important contribution.

10. On 3 January 1952, Iran refused to accept the World Bank proposals for reviving the Abadan refinery which was closed in 1951.

11. Following the abrogation by Egypt of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty (1936) on the Suez Canal zone, and of the Sudan Condominium Agreement (1899) on 15 October 1951, there were widespread riots and attacks on British forces in Suez leading to imposition of martial law by the Egyptian Government and reinforcement of British troops in the Suez Canal zone. The British Government insisted on the settlement of the future of Sudan on the basis of a plebiscite and refused to withdraw her troops from the Suez Canal zone.

12. On 13 October 1951, the United States, Britain, France and Turkey proposed a Middle East defence plan to Egypt, which envisaged setting up of a new Allied Middle East Command with Egypt as equal partner. The Command was to supercede the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 by handing over the Suez Canal zone to the Allied Command with Egyptian participation. The Plan was rejected by Egypt on 14 October 1951.

13. Churchill visited the United States and Canada from 5 to 27 January 1952.

11. Dr. Graham has presented his report on Kashmir.[14] This report does not take us very much further. It is, more or less, a factual report, though certain new suggestions are put forward by Dr. Graham which do not appear to us to be in line with the previous decisions of the U.N. Commission or what we agreed to. This will come up before the Security Council about the middle of this month when Dr. Graham is expected to make a statement. Further discussion is likely to take place about the end of January. Meanwhile, the Pakistan press is again indulging in some wild talk about Kashmir.[15] The Prime Minister of Pakistan has also hinted that the Security Council should impose some solution.[16] I thought it desirable to make it perfectly clear that we could not agree to any imposition.[17]

12. The U.N. General Assembly has been meeting in Paris. Among other questions discussed has been the South African Indian question.[18] This has become a hardy annual. Each time the General Assembly criticizes the South African attitude and proposes some further consultation. The Union Government of

14. The report submitted to the U.N. on 19 December 1951 regretted that India and Pakistan had failed to reach an agreement on demilitarization. Graham suggested new proposals which extended the date of demilitarization and appointment of the Plebiscite Administrator to 15 July 1952, and retention of minimum forces on both sides.

15. On 28 December 1951, *Dawn*, commenting about Kashmir, wrote that "Pakistan's patience has a limit and that limit has been reached."

16. Addressing a public meeting at Lahore on 25 December 1951, Khwaja Nazimuddin said, "Pakistan demands that the Security Council should use its powers and direct India to withdraw her forces from Kashmir. It should then arrange to hold a fair and impartial plebiscite under its auspices."

17. Nehru declared on 27 December at Rajahmundry that "if the Prime Minister of Pakistan or the Prime Minister of any country in the world thinks that anything is going to be imposed upon India in regard to Kashmir he is very much mistaken... We will stand no nonsense or bullying from any country in the world because we know we are right."

18. On 5 January 1952, the U.N. Special 'Ad-Hoc' Political Committee passed a resolution setting up a three-man commission to help India, Pakistan and South Africa to settle their differences over the treatment of Indians in South Africa. South Africa was also asked to suspend implementation of Group Areas Act pending conclusion of the negotiations.

South Africa, however, pursues its determined policy of racial discrimination in this matter as in others, regardless of the U.N.'s advice or directives. The South African Indian question becomes a part of the much larger issue of racial discrimination. There may be no quick or easy solution of this, but it is one of the most explosive and far-reaching issues of our times, because the whole of the continent of Africa is involved in this wider issue of racial discrimination. Delay in finding a solution makes the disease worse. It will be a bad day for all if a racial explosion takes place on a big scale in Africa. We have seen the consequences of delay in Iran and Egypt. These consequences may well be much worse in Africa.

13. In East Africa, the Government of the day, which is dominated by the European planter element, has passed a law bringing in separate communal electorates.[19] This has been done in the face of persistent and heated opposition on the part of Indians there, who have had enough experience of this discredited system of separate electorates. It is clear that this is meant to weaken various popular elements in East Africa and to make it easier for the European planters to hold on to their special interests and position.

14. As I am writing to you, we are having informal consultations with the Prime Minister and some other Ministers of Nepal, who have come to Delhi for this purpose.[20] The Government of Nepal had expressed a desire that our foreign and defence policies should be closely coordinated. We entirely agree with this proposal and the only question that arises is how to give effect to it. The Prime Minister of Nepal now is Shri Maitrika Prasad Koirala, President of the Nepali Congress. His assumption of the office of Prime Minister marks a further and important step in the democratization of Nepal. It may be

19. On 20 December 1952, the Kenyan Legislative Council passed a bill providing for separate electoral rolls for Muslim and non-Muslim Asians despite opposition from the non-Muslim Asians, Arabs and African members of the Council.

20. From 6 to 9 January 1952.

called the end of the first phase. The next phase should be the election of the Constituent Assembly and thus the completion of the political revolution in Nepal. It is worth remembering that these far-reaching and revolutionary changes in Nepal have taken place without much conflict or trouble. This has been largely due to the friendly co-operation between the Governments of Nepal and India.

15. A meeting of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers is taking place in London soon.[21] This will discuss the grave economic situation that has arisen more especially in the United Kingdom. The programmes of rearmament on a big scale are making their effect felt and depressing the economy of the countries concerned. Our Finance Minister is unable to attend this conference because of the elections. We have, however, sent a strong team, on an official basis, to this conference. It is possible that our Finance Minister might have to go to London some time next month to discuss special points as between India and the U.K.

16. A treaty of friendship with Turkey has been signed.[22]

17. Shri B.N. Rau, who has carried on his work as India's representative in the U.N. with such distinction, has now been elected a Member of the International Court of Justice. This is a well-deserved honour, but it deprives us of his services in the U.N. Our Ambassador in Washington, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, resigned from her post in order to stand as a candidate in the elections that are taking place in India.

18. You will have noticed that the Government of India has signed contracts with some foreign oil companies for the setting

21. The conference met from 15 to 21 January 1952 to consider ways of resolving the crisis in the sterling area because of the rapid reduction in the gold and dollar reserves.

22. The treaty, signed in Ankara on 14 December 1951, referred to the maintenance of diplomatic and consular relations, reciprocity in rights given to nationals of each country, settlement of all disputes through diplomatic channels, and strengthening of cultural ties.

up of oil refineries in India.[23] Some people have criticized these contracts without knowing all the facts.[24] It is true that this is rather a special contract and we should not like to repeat this. We have to buy petrol, as we have not got enough of it in India. If we cannot produce oil in the country, it must come from abroad. We have not the resources in trained men or money to build up refineries in various parts of India. The new agreement will give us these refineries and will thus mean a definite advantage to us both financially and in terms of availability of an article of great importance in the modern world.

19. The Ford Foundation of America have offered us a sum of money[25] which is to be utilized in developing fifty rural centres in India more or less on the lines of Etawah.[26]

20. Two days ago I signed an agreement[27] with the U.S. Government, which will result in a contribution, which may be considered a grant, of fifty million dollars for the development

23. On 30 November and 16 December 1951, the Government of India signed contracts with the Standard Vacuum Oil and the Burmah Shell Companies to set up refineries at Bombay. According to the agreements, the Companies were required to open Indian branches in India for operation and offer 25% of the capital to Indian investors in the form of preference stock. While the Indian Government assured that the Companies would not be acquired for 25 years and would be exempt from Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, the Companies assured employment and training of adequate number of Indians.

24. Asoka Mehta, in a statement on 3 December 1951, alleged that Nehru had entered into contracts with interests against whom Mossadeq was fighting. These interests had "through a rate war driven two Indian-owned companies to the wall. And now a long-term monopoly is assured to them."

25. On 22 January, an agreement was signed between the Indian Government and the Ford Foundation, providing for financial assistance of Rs. 95 lakhs by the Foundation for a programme of rural extension services.

26. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol.1, p.402.

27. Under the agreement, signed on 5 January, the United States was to contribute $ 50 million by 30 June 1952 to form an Indo-American Technical Co-operation Fund to be used for accelerating the work on development projects, especially community development schemes.

of townships and rural areas, in particular, places like Nilokheri[28] and Etawah. I attach great importance to these experiments which have already justified themselves fully. If we could spread them all over India, it would be a great thing, not only from the point of view of food production, etc., but because it will build up integrated communities.

21. Your Government must immediately consider the selection of some suitable sites for the building up of such townships or rural areas. Our Planning Commission will address you on this subject and I hope you will give early attention to their request.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

28. A rehabilitation scheme for displaced persons from West Pakistan was started in 1948 at Nilokheri near Kurukshetra, 110 kms from New Delhi.

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New Delhi
21 January, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,*

I should be grateful if you could send me a full appreciation of the recent elections in your State. This appreciation should not only deal with the elections but also with the position arising from them and what your suggestions and advice are about future developments. I shall be grateful to have these by the end of this month. I know that in some States, elections will not be complete by then. Naturally, in such cases, your reply will be provisional.

Please also deal with the question of the formation of the second chamber and what suggestions you have to make in regard to it.

You may, if you like, send me a provisional reply by the end of this month, to be followed up by a full reply a few days later when more results are available.

Please let me know the earliest possible date when the new Assembly can meet in your State.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

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New Delhi
22 January, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,*

I wrote to you yesterday.[1] I should like to make it clear that no step should be taken in any State, as a result of the elections, without full consultation with us. This will apply both to such States as are likely to have a majority and support of the present regime and those who may not have such a majority. In either event, full consideration and consultation with us must precede any step taken. This will apply to the formation of Ministries as well as to resignations.

Perhaps this letter is unnecessary; but I am particularly anxious that none of our State Governments should act in haste.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. See *ante*, item 69.

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New Delhi
31 January, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

I have at last finished my tours. Just a week ago I returned to Delhi and since then I have been trying to return to what is more or less my normal life here. Perhaps normal is hardly the right word to use, because there is no normality in these days for a person who holds a responsible position in the State. Much less can there be any normality during and after general elections. Having more or less passed through the stormy weather of the elections, we have to face the after-effects and the consequences and that is no easy business. Already many headaches loom in the distance.

2. The general elections were, by and large, a leap in the dark. Nobody could prophesy the result of an appeal to a new and vast electorate. There were no precedents or measuring rods available and any attempt at prophecy could not be much more than guess work. The Congress had some advantages and many grave disadvantages. The advantages were obvious—some kind of an organization, tradition and its past record. Even these advantages had their countervailing disadvantages, because tradition and past prestige gave rise to an easy optimism; the organization became loose and complacent; and the past record included also the past hopes and aspirations which became a standard to judge the more recent record.

3. There were also positive disadvantages, the obvious one being the close association with the governmental structure and the inevitable dissatisfaction with a Government in office for a number of years of economic stress and hardship. It was easy for any opposing party to lay stress on these hardships and

difficulties and practically to confine its programme and propaganda to one of condemnation of the Congress. Of course, errors and mistakes had been committed by the Congress and the Governments. These were exaggerated and the achievements of Government were conveniently ignored. Indeed, some of the propaganda against the Congress and the Governments made them appear to be monsters of evil.

4. The last five years had let loose many forces. There were those represented vaguely by different kinds of so-called leftists who laid stress on far-reaching economic changes. There were also strong communal elements among the Hindus and the Sikhs and others, and a growth of casteism in our politics. Relatively small constituencies encouraged an appeal to a dominant caste in that area. These were general considerations. More specifically certain State Governments had become very unpopular, as subsequent events showed. As I write this, elections are not over yet and many results have still to come. It would be foolish therefore for me to sit in judgment on them or to draw conclusions without adequate data. There have already been many surprises in these elections[1] and there might well be more surprises in store for us. Nevertheless, a certain picture has emerged all over India and we are justified in coming to some provisional conclusions.[2]

5. Broadly speaking, the Congress stood as a kind of progressive centre party pledged to economic changes but cautious in its approach. On the one side, there were the communal parties which were socially reactionary. There were also parties which definitely represented social conservatism like the *jagirdars,* zamindars and in some places big capital. On the other side, there were the so-called leftists of various shades and grades from Socialists to Communists. There were, of

1. Some prominent members of the Congress and other parties were defeated in the elections.

2. While the Congress was leading as the largest single party in all the States, it was strongly opposed in Madras by the K.M.P.P., the Socialists, the Communists and their allies; in Orissa, by the Ganatantra Parishad; by the Akali party in Pepsu; Independents and local parties in Rajasthan; and by the Communists and their allies and the Socialists and the Independents in Travancore-Cochin.

course, other groups too, such as the K.M.P.P. But it would require a very wise man indeed to say where exactly the K.M.P.P. was or if it was anywhere at all, because while vehemently anti-Congress, it was otherwise all things to all men and made alliances indiscriminately with other groups.

6. The Congress by tradition and historic necessity stood for the unity of the country, anti-communalism and fought against disintegrating tendencies. It is true that evils had crept into it and even some elements of communalism were to be seen within its ranks. It had also developed, as large political parties are apt to do, a certain boss-type of local politics. This had discouraged the development of local leadership and thus greatly lessened its contact with the people. In the elections, however, it stood four-square for unity and against communalism. On the whole, it can be said that it achieved success in this respect and communal parties fared badly against it. A significant fact was that the leftist parties seldom directly opposed communalism and indeed called it a bogey which hardly existed. That seemed to me a complete misreading of the situation. It has been only the vigorous opposition of the Congress to communalism during these elections that has checked the latter's growth. Where communalism has succeeded, it has generally done so with the help of the *jagirdars* and like elements.

7. Another feature of communalism, however, sometimes masquerading under a leftist guise, has undoubtedly come more to the front, especially in the south. This is voting on caste lines.[3]

8. One rather significant feature of the elections has been the permutations and combinations of various parties opposed to

3. For example, the Vanniya community in South Arcot supported the Tamilnad Toilers Party which fought elections with the Communist Party as part of the united front.

the Congress.[4] There was not much principle involved in this; indeed, principles were often sacrificed. Thus the Congress fought on all fronts and sometimes even within itself. Keeping in view these circumstances, the success of the Congress, except in south India, has been rather remarkable.

9. Undoubtedly in south India the Congress has largely failed,[5] although it is still the biggest single party in any State there. There are a multitude of reasons for this failure in the south, but I think in the main they are four: dissatisfaction with the existing State Governments; the food shortages and specially the lack of rice; disintegration of the Congress organization; and caste groupings. It is significant that leftist parties often took full advantage of these caste groupings, especially in Assembly elections.

10. These are some odd considerations and I could write much more on this subject. But the major fact is that in spite of the notable success of the Congress in many parts of the country, its failure in the south has great significance. It is something which encourages a certain inherent disintegrating tendency in the country against which the Congress has fought throughout its long career. Also it is clear evidence of dissatisfaction with the Congress on the ground that it has not been able to meet adequately the challenge of economic conditions. That feeling, I think, is widespread, though it was more concentrated in the south. Perhaps the south has also experienced the feeling that it was rather ignored by the north and that the north did not pay enough attention to its problems.

4. For example, there was an alliance between the Jan Sangh and the Akali Party in the Punjab, Pepsu and Delhi; between the Communists, the K.M.P.P., the Dravida Kazhagam and other regional parties in Madras and Travancore-Cochin; and between the K.M.P.P. and the Socialists in Madhya Pradesh.

5. The Congress won 146 out of 375 seats in Madras, 93 out of 175 in Hyderabad, and 44 out of 108 in Travancore-Cochin.

11. Another significant feature of these elections has been the success in socially backward areas, like Rajasthan, of the *jagirdari* element.[6] Old rulers and their numerous relatives have stood as candidates, usually supported by the Hindu communal organizations, and it has become evident that they still have considerable prestige in their own states. The Governments of those states had effectively alienated these ruling classes and, at the same time, had not gone far enough to win over the peasantry who were still afraid of their feudal lords and influenced by the glamour of royalty. It was no small matter when the ex-ruler, and even more so his wife, went canvassing or making personal appeals for votes. There is little doubt that many of these rulers and their supporters aimed at some kind of united effort to get back their lost privileges or to re-establish themselves in some other way. In particular, there was opposition to the abolition of the *jagirdari* system.[7]

12. The failure of the Socialist Party in these elections is also another significant feature. They have shown a peculiar capacity for misjudging a situation and for living in an unreal world of dreams. Their policies are often adventurist and did not carry weight. They lacked ballast very much. Communists, on the other hand, concentrated on local troubles and were usually able organizers. They did not indulge in tall talk like the Socialists and showed a certain practical sense in their immediate approach although no doubt their distant approach was probably very different.

13. You will forgive me for these odd reflections on the elections. Purely from the organizational point of view, they have been a tremendous success and, contrary to expectation,

6. In Rajasthan, *jagirdars* and former rulers contesting either as Independents or as the Jan Sangh, Ram Rajya Parishad and Hindu Mahasabha candidates secured 62 seats in the Rajasthan Assembly.

7. The Rajasthan Government had in November 1951 announced the abolition of the *jagirdari* system in the State through the "Land Reforms and Resumption of Jagirs Bill", which became law from 18 February 1952.

they have passed off peacefully and without any major trouble. Adult franchise has been a success[8] and, on the whole, there has been freedom and secrecy of voting. That achievement itself is very creditable to all those officials or non-officials, who were in charge. The electorate has also shown a very great deal of discipline and has exercised its judgment. Voting has been heavy in many places and a particularly pleasing feature has been the interest that women have taken.[9] But the result of these elections has produced a peculiar *mélange* in some States and the relatively even tenor of political life in India is likely to be gravely disturbed. Any number of problems are appearing on the horizon and will soon be upon us.

14. Political life in India has been concentrated on these elections during the last two or three months. People will now be excited about the formation of Ministries and the like. The elections are by no means over. Even the general elections for the House of the People and the State Assemblies will not be completely over till the end of February. Elections for the Second Chamber will then follow and last of all the election of the President. All this will take us to the latter part of April.

15. Meanwhile, while we were engrossed in our elections, the world has gone on and not solved any of its problems. It has indeed added to them. In Korea the talks about the ceasefire and armistice have not made much progress. The U.K. Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, has visited the President of the U.S.A. and made brave speeches there which, for all their eloquence, are disquieting and rather tend to emphasize the

8. Out of the total electorate of 173,213,635, the number of those who cast their votes was 88,612,171.

9. The Chief Election Commissioner informed the press on 4 February that women had voted in greater number than men in the elections.

prospect of and the preparation for war.[10] In Iran, there is a complete deadlock.[11] In Egypt, there has been a violent flare up.[12] In Tunisia, we are witnessing a repetition of the old conflict between a nationalist movement and a dominant colonial system.[13]

16. The Kashmir issue is again before the Security Council and is probably being argued even as I write this. Probably nothing new will happen there and Dr. Graham is likely to be given some more time.[14] There has been a good deal of excitement about the so-called Devers[15] Plan which Dr. Graham released recently.[16] The Devers' Plan which we knew and which had been given to our representatives,[17] was something very different from this new edition of it. We have

10. Speaking at the joint session of the U.S. Congress on 17 January 1952, Churchill warned that if the Korean truce once signed was broken, the answer of the United Kingdom and the United States would be "blunt, resolute and effective." He added that the ". . rearmament of the U.S.A., the Commonwealth and the British Empire and United Europe had already altered the balance of world power and might avoid the danger of a third world war."

11. See *ante*, p. 540

12. On 19 January, following armed attacks on the British forces by members of the National Liberation Army, the British forces occupied Kafr Abdou, Tel el Kabir, el Hamada and Ismailia.

13. The nationalist movement led by the neo-Destour Party under Habib Bourguiba organized a strike on 'Tunis Day' (1 February); there was violence and arrests by the French forces.

14. On 31 March, the Security Council asked Graham to continue his efforts and report back by the end of March 1952.

15. General Jacob L. Devers (1887-1979). U.S. General; military adviser to Graham.

16. The Devers' plan circulated at the United Nations on 21 January 1952 provided for stationing of 10,000 troops and Gilgit scouts on the Pakistan side and 14,000 troops on the Indian side after the withdrawal of forces by both India and Pakistan from Kashmir.

17. The plan circulated by Devers among the Indian representatives on 29 November 1951 had envisaged stationing of 21,000 Indian troops exclusive of 6,000 members of state militia on the Indian side, and 7,600 troops including both regular Pakistani troops and the civilian armed forces on the Pakistan side of the border. The plan made no mention of the Gilgit scouts.

made this perfectly clear.[18] We can never accept this new version.

17. In Nepal, there was a sudden crisis when a group of the Raksha Dal[19] in Kathmandu suddenly rebelled[20] and actually took possession of the headquarters of Government and many strategic points. Fortunately, this revolt fizzled out and the Government regained control soon. But the notorious Dr. K.I.Singh[21] escaped with a band of men, fully armed, and is at present roaming about. He might give trouble. Otherwise too there are some disquieting features in the Nepal situation and certain elements exploit them. During the recent visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal to Delhi, we had long talks and it was agreed that the defence and foreign policies of the two countries should be closely co-ordinated. We also hope to help Nepal in its development schemes by means of loans or otherwise.

18. There is one matter to which I should like to draw your special attention. We have talked a good deal about planning and there is the draft Five Year Plan which I hope will be finalized and improved in the process, by April. But all planning on a national scale depends on two important factors. One is public understanding and co-operation and the other is accurate data and statistics. I am afraid our statistics are still not only inadequate but even incorrect. We have to overhaul

18. On 23 January 1952.

19. A volunteer force of the Nepali National Congress formed in December 1950 and known as Mukti Sena, was renamed as Raksha Dal after the Nepali Congress came to power and was allowed to function along with the regular Nepalese Army.

20 On 22 January, the Raksha Dal captured the Government Secretariat and several other strategic points in Kathmandu, but the *coup* bid was foiled the next day.

21. (b. 1906). Joined the Nepali Congress during Second World War; led army revolt against the Rana regime, 1950; led *coup d'etat* attempt, January 1952, fled to Beijing after failure of *coup* but returned to Nepal, August 1955; organized United Democratic Party, 1956; Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and Home Affairs, July-November 1957.

this whole statistical apparatus of ours. There is, at present, a complete lack of co-ordination in it and there is no scrutiny worth the name. The first thing to do is to co-ordinate all branches of statistical work whether in the States or in the different Ministries of the Government of India and thus prevent overlapping and wastage. The second thing is to have an independent scrutiny of statistical data. Statistics, like audit, must be independent in order to be effective and yield proper results. We have to take this matter up soon and perhaps I shall address you in greater detail about it later.

19. I have already informed you in my last letter[22] about the agreement we have signed with the U.S. Government under which a contribution of fifty million dollars will be made to us for the development of townships in rural areas. The Planning Commission has addressed a letter to all State Governments on this subject and invited their proposals immediately. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research also addressed, sometime ago, some State Governments about the opening of agricultural extension training centres to be financed from funds made available by the Ford Foundation. These latter projects of agricultural extension might well merge in the larger rural-cum-urban community projects under the U.S. Technical Co-operation Plan. I would urge you to take early decisions in these matters and to select suitable sites for the community projects. Delay in selecting the sites in time may even lead to the loss of one crop season so far as the agricultural extension programme is concerned. I have already told you of the great importance I attach to these community projects and I would invite your Government's very special attention to them.

20. Parliament, as you know, is meeting on the 5th of February. This will be the last session of this dying Parliament.

22. see *ante*, p. 544.

It cannot be a very exciting session because controversial measures have to be avoided. But there will be excitement enough outside Parliament, as a result of the elections.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
10 February, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,*

As the Congress Party has already got a considerable majority in your State or is likely to get one the question of electing a leader and subsequently of forming a Ministry will arise soon. Probably in a number of our States there will be no difficulty at all about electing the leader. In any event it is highly desirable that this should be done as far as possible with unanimity. Whatever discussions are to take place should be conducted in private previously; the final decision at a Party meeting unanimously or nearly so. It is not desirable to give an exhibition of group voting. Where there is any difficulty I would be glad to help.

In regard to the formation of Ministries, no doubt, care will have to be taken. We have to balance experienced hands with fresh blood. Both are necessary. Merely a repetition of old Ministries even where this is possible, is not desirable and produces a feeling of staleness. As a matter of fact, a number of old Ministers have been defeated at the polls. I think it may be justly assumed that they were unpopular, whatever their other virtues might have been. Unpopularity should always be borne in mind in appointing any one as a Minister. Apart from this, it does seem to be necessary that some younger people should be given a chance.

You will, I hope, keep me in touch with developments.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

*A special letter addressed to the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bombay, Bihar, Saurashtra and Assam.

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Camp:Ranikhet
18 February, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing this letter to you from Ranikhet in the Kumaon Hills of Uttar Pradesh. I have come here ostensibly for election purposes, because elections were delayed in these mountain areas on account of the winter. They are now taking place and will be over within three or four days. This will be the last of the general elections.[1]

2. But, perhaps, the real reason for my coming here was the urge to see the mountains and the snow peaks again. After my hectic travelling about all over India and many troublesome days in Delhi, I felt the need for the cold air of the mountains and the sight of the snows. So, I came here for three days. Two of these were partly spent in meetings in various places in these mountain regions and partly in inspecting a fine enterprise of the U.P. Government at the foot of the mountains. This was in the *Terai* near Bareilly. The *Terai* was a jungle and marshy land exceedingly unhealthy and full of malaria. A large area has now been separated, cleaned up and has become a big State farm with fine fields, orchards, dairies, etc. The yield of this land is much greater than of land elsewhere. New villages have grown up and malaria has been completely put an end to in this entire area. Indeed, the first step that was taken was to put an end to malaria. It was only after that that other work could follow. This whole venture, called the Nainital Terai Reclamation and Colonization Scheme,[2] is one of those bright

1. The first general elections ended on 21 February 1952.

2. The scheme was started in 1949 to settle ex-servicemen, displaced persons and landless cultivators on the fertile *terai* land. By 1952, 35,000 acres of land had been reclaimed and 2,000 families settled in 16 villages. Of these 1,000 acres of land was brought under a central state farm, inaugurated by Nehru on 16 February 1952.

spots in India which hearten and encourage us. When I went there, I performed the opening ceremony of a new hospital.[3] The contrast between this reclaimed land and the original *Terai* jungle is remarkable.

3. As I motored up to Ranikhet, and subsequently to Almora, my mind went back to the time when I last passed this way. This was six years and eight months ago in June 1945, when I was released from Almora jail after nearly three years of prison most of which had been spent in Ahmednagar.[4] These six years and more have been full of major changes and big events in India; they have brought to us success as well as the lack of it, and they have brought many burdens also. But sitting here and gazing at the magnificent snow-range, with Nanda Devi and Trishul standing out proudly and dominating it, I felt at peace, or almost so, because there could be no complete forgetting of the difficulties that encompass us.

4. This district of Almora has long attracted adventurous Europeans. Missions of various kinds are spread out all over the place. These include Christian missions, as well as Hindu missions. Swami Vivekananda[5] was here for some time and there is a flourishing Ramakrishna[6] Mission at present.[7] There are other Hindu missions, especially of the Vaishnavite variety. A number of Europeans are attached to these Hindu missions, and some Europeans live separately the simple life of a Hindu recluse. There are Englishmen among them and Americans and Danes and, perhaps, others. One of them is a very eminent

3. At Rudrapur on 16 February 1952.

4. Nehru was arrested in Bombay on 9 August 1942 alongwith the other members of the Congress Working Committee and interned in Ahmednagar Fort. He was transferred to Bareilly jail on 28 March 1945 and after ten weeks was sent to Almora jail on 10 June and released from there after five days.

5. (1863-1902). Disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

6. Ramakrishna Parmahansa (1834-1886). Spiritual leader.

7. Popularly known as Advaita Ashram. It is situated at Mayavati near Almora.

surgeon[8] who used to be a member of the Indian Medical Service but suddenly gave it up and became some kind of a sanyasi here. There is an eminent American painter[9] also who is practically a Buddhist and has written a life of the Buddha. A young Englishman,[10] who used to be a professor, has gained the reputation of being a great yogi.

5. This is one side of the picture. There is another side also. There appears to be a strong urge for some missions to establish themselves on the Tibet road and, indeed, as near the Tibet border as possible. It must be remembered that Almora district borders Tibet. The frontier is a little more than eighty miles from where I sit, but it takes a week's journey by foot-path and bridle road to cover those eighty odd miles. It is strange, or perhaps not very strange, for some missions to feel so attracted to the border of Tibet, which has lately become very interesting for us also. For some distance on this side of the border, there is what is called an inner line which foreigners are not supposed to cross without permission. I fear, however, that this rule has not been strictly enforced in the past.

6. The elections are over at last, or nearly so, and we have now to face the results that flow from them. Like much else in life, these results are mixed and while some people rejoice at them, others are full of apprehensions. Undoubtedly, difficult situations might be created in some States and in all there will be some change. I see no reason for alarm, though there is plenty of reason for us to be wide awake and watchful.

8. Major Robert Dudley Alexander (d. 1957). Served in Indian Medical Service, 1928-38; joined the *ashram* at Mirtola, Almora; later took the name of Sri Haridas

9. Earl H. Brewster (d. 1958). American painter who settled in Almora in 1935 with his wife, Achshah, also a painter; author of *The Life of Gotama the Buddha* (1926).

10. Ronald Nixon (d. 1965). Professor of English at Lucknow and Banaras Universities, settled in an *ashram* at Mirtola, Almora, and took the name of Krishna Prem; author of *Initiation into Yoga*, *The Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita*, and *The Yoga of the Kathopanishad*.

7. One good result of the elections has been that it has shaken up the people of India. The interest taken in these elections all over the country has been very good. Oddly enough, the interest has been somewhat greater in rural areas than in the cities, and even the percentage of voters has usually been greater in rural areas.[11] I think that the average percentage works out to over 50. As a matter of fact far more people went to the polling booths than these figures indicate. But because their names were not correctly inscribed in the electoral roll, or because they could not wait long enough till their turn came, they could not vote. It was interesting to observe also that where there was a re-poll, a larger number voted. Probably, this was due to the initial shyness of the voter vanishing off. It may be that at a subsequent election a much larger number will vote.

8. The elections compelled candidates and their supporters to visit every village. It was a tremendous task of political education. Many people talk superiorly of the ignorance of the illiterate voter and even suggest that he is not worthy of the vote. My own experience has been, and this has been supported by many others, that the so-called illiterate voter showed greater civic sense than most people of the towns.

9. I have been trying to impress upon people the lessons of these elections and the principal lesson is to keep close contact with our people, to explain to them the problems we have to face and what we are trying to do, and to know from them what their difficulties and viewpoints are. When dealt with in this friendly and adult manner, their response is intelligent and good.

10. Our politics, ever since the attainment of independence, have been in a somewhat fluid or even nebulous stage. These elections have now given them some shape and we see now real problems emerging. The Socialists have failed in the past and they failed in these elections also because of their lack of reality.

11. Polling averaged 40 per cent in towns and 60 per cent in the villages.

They cannot get out of the atmosphere of a college debating society. It is extraordinary how, with the earnest men they have and with their other opportunities, they have failed to make good. The Congress succeeded, where it did, to the extent it came in touch with real problems and with the people.

11. In most of the States the Congress has got a clear overall majority,[12] and the problem that has to be faced there is the election of the leader and the formation of a Ministry. Oddly enough, too overwhelming a success brings its own difficulties and probably produces a sense of complacency; and yet nothing could be worse than any such sense of complacency. In three States, namely, Madras,[13] Rajasthan [14] and Madhya Bharat, [15] the Chief Ministers were defeated at the polls. In Travancore-Cochin, the Chief Minister[16] survived but the dominant party did not fare well at the elections. These States, as well as Orissa,[17] offer new problems. The defeated Ministers have as a rule resigned, but, inevitably, existing Governments have been asked to carry on till a new Government can come in. There was no other alternative open to us as there cannot be any gap period without a Government. Also, newly-elected persons, who are not in the old House, cannot be asked to undertake responsibility so long as the old House is carrying on.

12. The Congress failed to get absolute majority only in Pepsu, Madras and Travancore-Cochin.

13. P.S. Kumaraswamy Raja (1898-1957). Congressman from Madras; Minister for Public Works, Madras, 1937-39, and of Agriculture, 1946; Chief Minister of Madras, 1948-52; Governor of Orissa, 1954-56.

14. Jai Narain Vyas.

15. Takhatmal Jain (1895-1976). Chief Minister, Madhya Bharat, 1950-52 and 1955-57.

16. C. Kesavan (1891-1969). Took part in the State People's Movement in Travancore and founder-member of Travancore State Congress; Chief Minister, 1951-52.

17. In Orissa, the Congress won 68 out of 140 seats and secured the support of a few Independent members.

12. In Madras, the Governor[18] accepted these resignations,[19] except that of the Chief Minister, who had also been defeated, though by a very narrow margin. The Chief Minister, together with his surviving colleagues is now functioning in a Caretaker Ministry. Some people have criticized this as being an affront on democracy. I really fail to understand this criticism, and I think that we have acted quite rightly in this matter. Any other course would have been worse.

13. There is a good deal of talk of President's rule. If we are driven to it and circumstances indicate that there can be no stable Government, then we shall certainly recommend President's rule and later elections. But it would not be right to impose President's rule till all other avenues have been explored.

14. Whatever the composition of a State Government might be, it is clear that they must not only remain in close touch with the people but should also develop policies and programmes which bring quick relief to the people. We have drawn up many fine and big schemes and they are important. But these fine schemes bear fruit after a considerable time. It has become urgent that we should take all necessary steps to lessen the distress of our people wherever this exists. We can afford no longer to talk of a distant future. There is no time for that and people expect some relief at an early stage. Among the things that have to be pushed through as rapidly as possible is agrarian reform, i.e., putting an end to zamindaris, *jagirdaris*, etc. This is an urgent matter for every State to tackle. Unless we complete that process soon, we shall get into deeper waters.

15. The outstanding event of the last fortnight has been the death of King George VI.[20] I had occasion to meet King George

18. K. Kukharsinghji Bhavsinghji. For b. fn. see Vol.1. p. 186.

19. On 8 February 1952, the Governor asked the Chief Minister to continue as a Caretaker Government till the formation of a new Ministry.

20. (1895-1952). He became King in 1937 and died on 6 February 1952.

at least half a dozen times or more. He was a shy person and perhaps my previous reputation made him feel shyer still. But gradually that shyness wore off and he discussed with me many problems relating to India. He was obviously interested in India. The change-over to a Republic created a situation without parallel. He was personally concerned in this matter and took a great deal of interest in it. It was partly, at least, due to his desire to find a way out that an honourable way out was found without in the least affecting our independence or our republican status.

16. As some doubts have arisen, I should like to make it clear that the death of King George VI does not make any difference to our association with the Commonwealth. You will remember how this association took place. When it was finally decided that we should become a Republic, i.e., when the Constituent Assembly so decided, I made a statement to that effect before the Prime Ministers' Conference in London in April 1949.[21] In May 1949 the Constituent Assembly ratified that statement[22] of mine and thus accepted membership of the Commonwealth for the Republic of India. We also accepted the King as the symbol of the free association of the independent member nations of the Commonwealth and, as such, the Head of the Commonwealth. It must be borne in mind that as a Republic we cease to owe any allegiance to the King. Indeed, he ceases to have any external authority over us of any kind whatever.

17. Our association with the Commonwealth was novel and without precedent. Nevertheless, it has stood the test of these two and a half years. I am quite sure that the decision we reached was a right one. Some people criticize it still, but that must be on some vague sentimental ground which has no force behind it. No one can point out a single act of commission or omission which we did against our own wishes or interests because of our membership of the Commonwealth. We have

21. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol.1. p. 340.
22. On 17 May 1949. See *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 1. p. 340.

functioned with complete independence and have often adopted a line different from that of other member nations of the Commonwealth; and yet we have remained on friendly terms with them except, of course, with the Union of South Africa. Our association with the Commonwealth has been a factor for peace in the world.

18. Even as our present association is based on a resolution of the Constituent Assembly, it can be put an end to by a declaration of Parliament. There are no commitments on either side and nothing to bind us together against our wishes. Our Constitution and laws make no reference to the King. Under that Constitution the executive power of the Republic of India in regard to matters, internal and external, is vested in the President of India. The declaration ratified by the Constituent Assembly on the 17th May 1949 is in the nature of a treaty or an agreement between independent nations. Oddly enough, it is a treaty with no binding clauses and thus is better than the normal written treaty. This treaty or agreement does not cease to be operative by a change in the head of one of the States which is a party to the treaty. Such a change does not alter the person of the State which concluded the treaty. Thus, the death of the King makes no difference to that treaty or agreement and we continue to be members of the Commonwealth and recognize the new Queen Elizabeth II[23] as the head of that Commonwealth for the time being. I have dealt with this matter at some length in order to remove any misunderstanding.

19. There appears to be a fair chance of a ceasefire in Korea.[24] That is to be welcomed. But, unfortunately, this does not indicate any real improvement in the international situation although every little step in the right direction should be welcomed. The ceasefire will represent the pressure of

23. (b.1926). Queen of England since 1952.

24. The two sides came very near to an agreement on a truce followed by a political conference but the talks broke down.

circumstances on both sides, and not any change of heart. It may, of course, lead gradually to a lessening of tension. On both sides the language continues to be minatory and rather threatening.[25] It is even suggested that the Chinese Government should be officially informed that a breach of the ceasefire terms will lead to immediate action.[26] Such warning can only lead to tension and bitterness. It seems peculiarly uncalled for, because both the parties know well enough that a breach of the ceasefire will lead to serious results. Another very unfortunate recent happening, to which I think I referred in a previous letter, was Yoshida's letter [27] to Dulles [28] about Japan recognizing the Formosa Government. Apart from the merits of such a step, and they are not at all obvious to me, the manner of doing it was most unfortunate and left an unhealthy taste.

20. As you know, our Finance Minister has been to London[29] and a little before he went there was a conference there to discuss what is called 'the sterling area crisis'. Attempts were made in this conference to induce sterling countries to reduce their dollar imports and their general expenditure. So far as we are concerned, there was little room for much reduction as we have been making strenuous efforts in the past to stop all unnecessary imports. There is frequent reference to what is

25. During the discussions in the General Assembly on 2 February 1952 on the Korean question, the Soviet delegate charged the United States of pressurizing the Assembly into postponing the discussion so that it would have a free hand for its "blood-thirsty business in Korea", accused them of "planning to encompass not only Korea but the entire Far East", and branded the U.N. negotiators as "maniacs and cannibals." The British delegate warned the Communist countries to moderate their language and "lower the temperature of these public discussions."

26. There was speculation in the Western press that the United States and her allies were planning to make a joint statement on these lines.

27. On 24 December 1951. Later, on 31 January 1952, Prime Minister Yoshida designated a plenipotentiary of the Japanese Government to negotiate a bilateral treaty with Taiwan. It was signed on 28 April 1952.

28. John Foster Dulles (1888-1959). American lawyer; consultant to Secretary of State, 1950; Secretary of State, 1953-59.

29. From 4 to 11 February 1952.

called 'improvident spending', meaning presumably expenditure on social services and the like. As a matter of fact, the economic crisis in the West has been caused principally by the new programmes of rearmament. Because of these, not only has expenditure gone up tremendously, but raw materials are being used in increasing measure for defence purposes. The result is a certain lowering of standards in the West to which, naturally, exception is taken. Thus this economic crisis is intimately connected with the cold war that is going on. We have kept out of this cold war, but we are naturally affected by its economic consequences. We try, however, to keep out of these entanglements as much as possible.

21. The situation in Nepal continues to be unhealthy and is causing us some anxiety. Nothing special has happened there recently, but there is a lack of stability. Democracy has come there without the essential basis for it and we see a very backward country trying to adapt itself to democratic procedures without the equipment for them. We are prepared to help, of course, but we are anxious at the same time not to interfere.

22. As a result of the elections, Caretaker Governments have come into being in some of the States.[30] In others very soon there will be new Ministries. I have already suggested that it would be desirable to have fresh blood in our new Ministries as far as possible. It must be remembered that every State Government, and for that matter the Central Government also, has to function in future in a much more speedy and wide awake manner than in the past. I imagine that the most important portfolio in each Government will be that of the Development Minister. It is on the fulfilment of our schemes of development that judgement will be pronounced on our various Governments. These development schemes should not only be long-term ones, but such as bring results speedily. I have already told you that I attach the greatest importance to the community projects that are being considered now.

30. In Madhya Bharat, Madras, Rajasthan and Travancore-Cochin.

23. There has been a good deal of scare-writing in the press about the food situation.[31] I think this has been much exaggerated. The situation is not satisfactory, but it is certainly not worse than last year. Indeed, it is better. The States naturally incline towards underestimating their production and hence one is led to imagine that the situation is very bad. But I am quite sure that the estimates of some of the States are very far from the truth. I have already written to you of the necessity for independent statistical surveys of production, and specially food production. This has become a matter of paramount importance. Otherwise, we cannot have any sound food policy or planning.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

31. For example, *The Statesman* (New Delhi) on 10 February wrote of the threat of famine in eastern U.P.

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New Delhi
16 March, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to you after a full month, that is, I have missed writing to you at the beginning of this month as I should have done. You will forgive me.

2. We have finished with the general elections and we have now to go through the other processes of elections. It is extraordinary how much of one's time and energy is taken up in a system of democracy by elections. Life appears to become a ceaseless round of elections with relatively brief intervals in between. Even the approach of elections casts a shadow on political affairs. It is well-known that a powerful factor in the international situation today is the approaching Presidential election in the United States of America.[1] No party there and no candidate can adopt a policy which, though desirable, might antagonize some groups of voters.

3. We have now to elect our second chambers in the States as well as the Council of States at the Centre. When this process is completed, the Presidential election will have to take place and *last of all the election of the Vice-President and the Speaker. Probably, the polling for the* Presidential election, if this is contested, will take place on the second of May, the result being declared about the 6th of May. A programme has been drawn up and will be sent to you separately. The new Parliament is likely to meet about the middle of May.

1. Held on 4 November 1952, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Republican candidate, defeated Adlai Stevenson decisively and became the first Republican President in twenty years.

4. In a few States, where there are no second chambers, the new Ministries have been formed[2] and the new Assemblies will be meeting soon. Where there are second chambers, the Legislature will not be fully formed till the second half of April.

5. Some days ago, I paid visits to the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works,[3] the Damodar Valley,[4] the fertilizer factory at Sindri[5] and the Institute of Technology at Kharagpur.[6] This visit was very heartening and exhilarating, because I saw great new structures rising up and new townships being built, symbolic of what we want the new India to be. Sindri, which I inaugurated formally, is a very impressive affair. It is something more than a fertilizer factory. A new town has grown up where a vast chemical industry is taking shape. We have had some trouble with this in the early stages, but during the last year or two, progress has been rapid and results are now appearing.

6. In some ways the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works pleased me even more, although they are obviously on a smaller scale. Here also a new township has grown up and the town planning and the workers' houses were very attractive. Two days later I went to Kharagpur and the workers' houses there were very bad indeed. I visited Kanpur also[7] and saw the slum dwellings of the workers there. I was horrified and I have not yet recovered from the shock.

2. Between 20 February and 13 March 1952, new Ministries were formed in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Saurashtra, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan, Assam, Hyderabad, Himachal Pradesh, Travancore-Cochin and Vindhya Pradesh.

3. On 1 March 1952.

4. *En route* to Sindri on 2 March, Nehru visited the Damodar Valley Corporation.

5. The factory, which was the largest of its kind in Asia and one of the largest in the world, was formally opened on 2 March 1952 by Nehru.

6. The Institute was inaugurated on 3 March.

7. On 24 February 1952.

7. We discuss often enough great housing schemes for workers and then we come to the conclusion that they are too costly and therefore little progress is made. It is true that the problem is colossal and unless we have the resources we cannot tackle it adequately. But I cannot reconcile myself to the continuation of these horrible slums. My immediate reaction in Kanpur was that these slums should be burnt. That reaction holds still and I am convinced that it is better to have no houses at all and for the workers to be given an open space to live in temporarily than to be made to live in places which are not fit for domestic animals.

8. All of us, no doubt, feel the necessity for better housing for our workers and others and yet I have a sensation that we do not feel this quite as acutely as we ought to feel. There is no sense of horror and urgency about it. If we have an epidemic of plague, we shake ourselves up and try to suppress it with all our might. These slum dwellings are as bad as an epidemic and for us to tolerate them, even though we dislike them, means a certain complacency, a certain acceptance of things as they are, even though they are very bad.

9. I think that housing must be given a high priority. We might not be able to change the face of India quickly, but we should proceed about it with some speed. I think that our normal approach to this has been wholly unsatisfactory. We talk about the life of a building and the P.W.D. builds structures which, no doubt, are very solid. More often it does not build them at all because we cannot afford them. I cannot see why so much stress is laid on the long life of a building when the building consists of bare walls and little else. We have to think out this problem afresh and take urgent steps. Private and vested interests must on no account come in the way of this housing reform.

10. The food situation in Madras, and even more so the water situation there, have become rather critical, especially in

Rayalaseema and two or three other districts.[8] Our Food Minister visited these scarcity areas[9] and has come back with certain proposals[10] which we are considering. As a matter of fact, the overall all-India situation in respect of food is not too bad. It is better than last year's. Therefore, there is no need for alarm at all. But there is need for us to husband our resources to the utmost and to help in the scarcity areas. We had to meet an even greater peril last year in Bihar. We fought that and succeeded in averting it. We must do likewise in Madras and elsewhere.

11. There has been recently a sharp fall in prices of some commodities[11] and this has given rise to demands for Government to step in and help the market.[12] We see no reason to do so, at this stage, at any rate. Indeed we are not unduly alarmed at the prospect of prices coming down. There are certainly dangers and therefore it is necessary for us to be alert and watchful. But there are also advantageous aspects of this fall. Government therefore do not propose to take any special steps for the time being. It must be realized that the loss it has caused is to speculators who cannot expect much sympathy from others. The main test is that production should not suffer. Apart from this, a fall in prices is to be welcomed.

8. Drought conditions prevailed in the districts of Cuddapah, Chittoor, Chingleput and North Arcot and in parts of Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Anantapur, Tiruchirapalli, Salem and Coimbatore districts due to failure of monsoons for five consecutive years.

9. K.M. Munshi toured Chittoor, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur and Chingleput districts on 9 and 10 March 1952.

10. After his tour, the Food Minister said that the immediate danger was that the wells were running dry and there was lack of employment for landless labour. This required immediate opening of relief works.

11. The retail prices of essential food items, cotton seeds, jute, edible oils and spices fell sharply between 7 and 15 March 1952. The prices touched the lowest levels between the 13th and the 15th.

12. Appeals were made to the Central Government by the All India Exporters' Association, the South India Chambers of Commerce and various other organizations for a sharp reduction of the export duty on raw cotton, cotton textiles, oil and oilseeds, and for taking urgent steps to arrest the decline in market prices which had created a state of panic in the market.

12. Some two or three weeks ago, it seemed pretty certain that there would be a ceasefire in Korea. Now this has become doubtful. The actual lack of agreement at Panmunjom is not great and is largely concerned with the prestige of the different parties. Meanwhile, a new development has taken place. The Chinese Government have openly charged the U.S. Army with carrying on a bacteriological form of attack both in North Korea and China proper.[13] Indeed, people in China from all reports are highly indignant. They have further said that, in case any American airmen land in North Korea or China, they will be treated as war criminals.[14] The U.S. Government has denied this charge completely[15] and has suggested some kind of an international inquiry.[16] The Chinese Government have not agreed to this inquiry, as suggested. They have had an inquiry of their own which, according to them, supports or even proves their thesis.[17]

13. This is a very serious development and it has, for the moment, put the ceasefire negotiations completely in the shade. It appears almost unbelievable that the Chinese charge can be true. But whether it is true or not, the fact remains that there is a vast amount of excitement and passion in China over this matter. In the event of U.S. airmen being treated as war

13. The charge was that American artillery had fired shells loaded with disease-laden insects in areas in control of North Korea. The United States was also accused of dropping plague-bearing fleas, spiders and insects. Between 25 February and 5 March 1952, 448 U.S. planes were alleged to have flown over Manchuria causing germ warfare.

14. Zhou En-lai said this over Beijing Radio on 8 March 1952.

15. On 4 March, the U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, said that the Chinese charges of germ warfare were "nonsense" and "entirely false."

16. On 4 March, Acheson challenged China to submit to an investigation their charges of germ warfare and said that the U.S. Government would welcome an impartial investigation by an international agency such as the International Commission of the Red Cross.

17. The *People's Daily* (Beijing) of 15 March 1952 published pictures claiming to prove germ warfare. On 15 March, Beijing Radio announced that a 70-man commission, headed by the President of the Chinese Red Cross Society had left Beijing to enquire into germ warfare in north-east China and Korea.

criminals, the reactions in the U.S. will be very great indeed. We have thus to face a new and critical situation in the Far East.

14. In Europe, although there is no basic improvement in the international situation, there does appear to be some lessening of tension and less fear of war in the near future. But the development of the conflict in the Far East, if this spreads, will have far-reaching repercussions in Europe and elsewhere.

15. Dr. Graham has come back to Delhi from Pakistan.[18] We have made little progress in our talks[19] and for the moment there does not appear to be any prospect of any kind of agreement being reached. We have offered to reduce our forces in Kashmir to the lowest limit. The offer is to make them about one-sixth of what they were at the time of the ceasefire. Also to take away big armour. This makes the reduced force hardly adequate to prevent infiltration. We have suggested also that this force might be kept right at the borders and the ceasefire line so that no one can possibly say that it can interfere with the plebiscite. The Pakistan Government, however, wants something approaching parity, that is, it wants us to reduce our forces still further and to keep some forces of its own in 'Azad Kashmir'.[20] We have made it clear that we cannot accept this.[21]

18. Graham who was in Pakistan from 8 to 13 March, reached Delhi on 14 March 1952 for consultation.

19. The two points on which agreement could not be reached related to the quantum of forces and the appointment of a plebiscite administrator.

20. On 11 March 1952, the Prime Minister of Pakistan told Graham that they "expect a substantial reduction of forces on the Indian side and an increase of forces on the 'Azad Kashmir' side."

21. On 15 March 1952, Nehru made it clear to Graham that "India had taken up her position on certain points which were basic, that one of these points was that Pakistan was an aggressor and, as such, could not claim equality with India in Jammu and Kashmir state in any respect, and that it followed that Pakistan could not be allowed to maintain any forces on the 'Azad Kashmir' side of the ceasefire line." There was no difference between the Pakistan regular army and the 'Azad Kashmir' forces so far as demilitarization was concerned.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan press is again full of passionate denunciations and appeals for "other methods" being employed, i.e., war. This technique is adopted whenever Dr. Graham comes here or the matter goes to the Security Council. There is no particular reason for us to be alarmed, but we should always be alert.

16. We have just had a Governors' and Rajpramukhs' Conference in Delhi.[22] These conferences have proved useful. I think that, perhaps, it would be a good idea to have, once a year, a Chief Ministers' Conference in Delhi where many of our common problems can be discussed.

17. Among the various subjects discussed at the Governors' Conference was the question of the co-operative organization. We talk a great deal about this and sometimes imagine that we are making great progress. It was pointed out, however, that nearly all of these co-operatives are for credit purposes only and have little to do with agricultural production. Many of them are called, rather grandiloquently, multi-purpose co-operatives. The multi-purpose apparently consists of the fact that they sell salt, kerosene oil, etc. The co-operative staff normally thinks in terms of credit only and is too busy with its own rules and regulations to encourage or advance the cause of co-operation. The conference felt that it was necessary to re-orient our approach to co-operation completely. If necessary, the present staff should be changed or, at any rate, should be trained.

18. Another subject mentioned at the Governors' Conference was horse-breeding. Some alarm was expressed at the proposals of some State Governments in regard to racing, which are likely to put an end to the growing horse-breeding industry in India. From the defence point of view, horse-breeding is important.

22. On 14 and 15 March 1952.

19. The evacuee property law was also discussed and it was felt that the time had come to change it in many ways. There is no doubt that it works harshly for large numbers of persons who are completely innocent. The whole conception of 'intending evacuee' is extraordinary. It becomes difficult for Muslim businessmen and shopkeepers to carry on their work properly, because of the shadow of this law. It is proposed to change this law as early as possible.[23] Meanwhile, it is desirable that State Governments should take particular care that innocent people do not suffer.

20. As you are aware, we are sending a cultural mission to China about the middle of April. Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit has been chosen to lead this delegation.[24]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

23. The Evacuee Property Act, 1950, was amended on 9 April 1953.

24. The delegation of 14 members left for China on 26 April 1952. The chief aim of the mission was to acquaint the Chinese people with various aspects of traditional Indian thought and recent cultural trends in India. The mission was also expected to report on the current cultural scene in China.

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New Delhi
15 April, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

I am sorry that I have again missed one of my fortnightly letters. This month of April has brought heavier work than usual and the responsibilities for many decisions. This will continue for another month when we shall start the new Parliament.

2. Since I wrote to you last, some new Ministries have been formed[1] and for some of you this letter might be the first of this series. I welcome you to your high and responsible office and assure you of all the co-operation that I can give you. We have a full and detailed Constitution of India, defining the rights and responsibilities of the Centre and of the States. But, however good the Constitution of a country might be, it depends ultimately on the people of that country, and more especially on those in positions of responsibility, how work is carried on and what results are achieved. Thus, the element of co-operation, of seeking friendly counsel with each other and of ever keeping the larger end in view, are of paramount importance. I trust that, as in the past, so in the future, we shall have that intimate relationship of comrades working together for achievement of common ends, and having faith in each other.

3. I have pointed out in some letters, written after the general elections, how the scene in India, both political and economic, has gradually changed and has, therefore, to be viewed in the light of new circumstances. The change is really a continuous

1. Between 17 March and 10 April, Congress Ministries took office in Coorg, Delhi, Pepsu, Ajmer, Mysore and Madras.

one all over the world and in Asia especially. In India, it was brought about, to some extent, by the elections. We have to understand the significance and reality of these forces that are moving our people and try to utilize them for the largest good. That good can only come if we have the spirit of co-operative effort and understanding of each other and if we avoid narrowness of mind and petty groupings.

4. India continues to attract a great deal of attention from the wider world. Large numbers of Indians are invited to foreign countries and many foreigners come to India. We have had in recent weeks and months many delegations from the U.S.A.,[2] China [3] and the U.S.S.R.[4] We have had a Turkish press delegation [5] and a visit of groups of Iraqi and Turkish women.[6] We welcome these contacts. It has been a satisfaction to find that eminent people who come to India from abroad carry back with them marked impressions favourable to India and the work that is being done here. There is much that can be criticized in India and there is no lack of critics both in India and outside. But it is patent to anyone who wishes to see that there are great things also being done in this country of ours, things which are basic to country's development. The Turkish delegation was powerfully impressed by not only our achievements but also the spirit that they found prevailing in the country. One of their well-known journalists described India as "a nation in ecstasy", an ecstasy of work and the desire to achieve and go ahead. That may be, perhaps, too enthusiastic a description, but there is something in it. We who live in India are aware of what we have achieved and what we have failed to achieve, more especially the latter. An outsider

2. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt visited India from 27 February to 24 March 1952.

3. See *ante*, p. 492.

4. Two Soviet delegations of artists and writers respectively visited India in March-April 1952.

5. Between 5 February and 6 April 1952, a goodwill delegation visited the sites of important river valley schemes, industrial enterprises and agricultural projects.

6. A Iraqi women's delegation led by Esmath el Said and a Turkish delegation led by Surriya Agaogu came to India in April 1952 for two weeks.

sees things in better perspective and he compares our country with others. I think that this comparison is much to the advantage of India.

5. It is generally recognized, and certainly the Indian public has shown its appreciation of it in the elections, that the policy pursued by India in regard to foreign affairs has been correct and, though not spectacular, has progressively shown results. In such a matter, even negative results are worthwhile, for it is something not to do wrong in this complicated and tormented world of ours. But we have had more than negative results, and there is definite positive achievement. Gradually, even our hardened critics outside and inside India have come to recognize this. It is partly because of this that many persons who count in the world come to India to see for themselves how this great country is gradually evolving and laying the foundations of progress.

6. In the world outside, the most serious development has been the charge made by the Chinese Government that the American Air Force has been carrying on germ warfare in North Korea and parts of north China.[7] Nothing could be more serious or damaging than such a grave charge. The U.S. Government has denied it and asked for an investigation through the International Red Cross.[8] The Chinese Government, as well as the Soviet, say that the Red Cross is not an impartial organization and have rejected this proposal.[9] Meanwhile, there has been tremendous propaganda in China

7. On 15 and 31 March, Beijing Radio alleged that the Allies were extending germ warfare to south-east and north-east China and that American aircraft flew over Shantung and Manchurian provinces and dropped disease-carrying fleas, spiders and mosquitoes.

8. On 11 March and again on 15 and 20 March 1952.

9. Jacob Malik, the Soviet representative, informed the U.N. Disarmament Committee on 26 March 1952 that the Red Cross was neither international nor impartial and therefore the Soviet Union would not agree to the U.S. proposal that the Red Cross investigate the charge of germ warfare.

and in the Soviet Union, and, to some extent, elsewhere, based on some reports of investigations held in China.[10]

7. In such a matter, the normal course would be for some really impartial body or individuals to investigate and give their opinion. But, unfortunately, as the "cold war" proceeds, the number of people who can be accepted as impartial observers by both parties, appears to grow less and less. The result is that no investigation, which can be termed impartial, is taking place, and, inevitably, we can only say that the charges made have not been proved yet to the satisfaction of neutral people.

8. Yet, the fact remains that these charges have created the greatest excitement in China. That excitement is understandable if the charges are believed in. It is difficult in such matters of delicacy for another Government to intervene. We have tried, however, to suggest some basis for an impartial and neutral investigation, but our efforts have not succeeded.[11] The position is a serious one. If the charges are true, then obviously grave consequences follow. If the charges are not true, even so the consequences are very serious, because then we have to find out the reason for this intensified and passion-raising propaganda. What political motive lies behind it? How far does this increase the pace towards world conflict? Unfortunately, in past years there has been a good deal of talk and discussion in technical and other periodicals in the U.S. about the utilization of various kinds of germs, etc., for this kind of horrible warfare. Probably most great countries have experimented and prepared themselves for such an eventuality.

10. On 16 and 17 March 1952, the *People's Daily* (Beijing) and the Soviet press published prominently some "photographic evidence" and the results of an investigation conducted by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers comprising British, Australian, Italian, French and Chinese judicial experts. On 18 March, Moscow Radio announced that the reports of germ warfare had been confirmed by the "western jurists" and named some as eyewitnesses.

11. Zhou En-lai would not accept Nehru's suggestion of an impartial investigation as he thought that American guilt had been proved.

Indeed, there was talk of this even during the closing stages of the last great War. Because of this talk, and because of some foolish speeches made by irresponsible people, some material is provided for the belief that this might be or is being used.

9. In Western Europe, the Atlantic Powers have been meeting and discussing repeatedly the question of German rearmament and a European army. Some progress has been made in this respect,[12] but not much, because of the inherent suspicions and fears of the parties concerned.[13] Also because all this involves a tremendous burden on the people of Western Europe in the shape of rearmament and this is affecting social services and the standard of living.

10. All this tends to continue the tension that exists in the world and, in fact, aggravates it. And yet, the people of the world undoubtedly hunger for peace and quiet. Whenever there is any ray of hope, there is an immediate reaction in favour of some step to ensure peace. Thus, recently, our Ambassador in Moscow, Dr. Radhakrishnan,[14] on the eve of his departure, saw Marshal Stalin.[15] This was an unusual event as Stalin hardly ever sees foreign Ambassadors. It was a testimony of the good work done by Dr. Radhakrishnan. Very brief reports of the interview were flashed across the world and all

12. On 24 February 1952, it was officially announced that the NATO nations, during the current year, would provide approximately 50 divisions in combat readiness and 4,000 operational aircraft in Western Europe towards the collective defence of the North Atlantic community. The next day, West Germany's contribution to the European defence was stated to be at 850 million DM (£72 million) a month.

13. The French had expressed doubts about the guarantees regarding West Germany's rearming herself as a western partner. West Germany, on the other hand, asked for an equal status with the other Europan members of the NATO and freedom for some war criminals.

14. For b.fn.see Vol.1, p.416.

15. On 5 April 1952.

kinds of interpretations were made.[16] We have had a longer report of this interview. From this, it would appear that Marshal Stalin desires peace in the world, but is highly suspicious of the Western Powers. It would also appear that he wanted to make a special gesture of friendliness towards India.

11. We have had occasion to take exception to the type of propaganda going on in the Russian press and sometimes in the Moscow Radio about India. This propaganda was often based on completely false reports about our elections and subsequent events. A correspondent of a Russian newspaper in India was probably largely responsible for this. On our pointing this out to the Russian Foreign Office, and later to Marshal Stalin, Stalin ordered that this particular correspondent should be withdrawn from India.

12. The position in Egypt and Iran continues to be one of stalemate. In Tunisia, however, things are moving in a wrong direction. Not learning from the lesson even of recent history, the French Government is pursuing a policy of repression of national aspirations.[17] This matter has been taken up by a large number of Asian and African countries in the United

16 There was much speculation in the U S A on what some described as the "new Soviet peace offensive." They saw special significance in the timing of the interview as it coincided with the American Presidential campaign. The *New York Herald Tribune* of 8 April commented that the Indian Ambassador may have been chosen as the new "carrier" to transmit Kremlin's "still vague, but increasingly numerous proposals for attenuating the world crisis." Some also thought that Nehru had begun to be regarded by Stalin as one of the important leaders of the world who could help resolve the East-West conflict.

17. After nearly two months of violent clashes, on the night of 25-26 March, four members of the Tunisian Government were arrested and the French Commander-in-Chief entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining public order; and on 28 March, the Tunisian Government was dismissed. A new loyalist Government was formed on 12 April by the French but the nationalist agitation continued.

Nations.[18] India has, of course, joined in this. It is not our desire to go about condemning any country, even the French Government, because we avoid condemnations which only increase tension. We wanted the Tunisian affair to be considered calmly and quietly with a view to solving it to the satisfaction of the parties concerned. What has surprised me is the attitude taken by some Great Powers in the Security Council. They have objected even to a discussion of this matter there on some technical or like plea.[19] This appears to me to be extraordinary. When the whole Asian and African world wants a matter to be discussed, surely that should be enough. To suppress discussion is to raise doubts in the minds of many of us about the utility of the United Nations. We have believed in the United Nations, not because it is anywhere near perfect, but because it embodies an ideal which is essential for the world.

13. In the United Kingdom, the recent municipal elections have a larger significance.[20] They show a marked turnover to Labour. Coming so soon after the general election there, this is important and indicates that the Conservative Government in the United Kingdom is not so solidly based as might be thought.

18. On 1 February 1952, a group of fifteen Asian and African countries including India addressed letters to the President of the U.N. General Assembly and the Security Council expressing concern at the "alarming news of military intervention" in Tunisia which they felt constituted a "threat to international peace and security." On 4 February, they decided to refer the Tunisian question to the Security Council under Article 34 of the U.N. Charter. A formal request for an immediate meeting of the Security Council to consider the Tunisian question was submitted on 2 April by twelve members of the Asian and African group, who requested that they be allowed to take part in the discussion.

19. On 14 April, the Security Council rejected the inclusion of the Tunisian question on its agenda. While, on 4 April, France opposed the hearing of the Tunisian issue on the plea that the crisis had already ended, on 7th and 8th, the United Kingdom and the United States opposed the move to take up the Tunisian problem as they did not favour international intervention between the French and the Tunisians "on the spot."

20. The elections to the county councils took place between 3 and 9 April.

14. Probably, within the next few days, Dr.Graham will present his fresh report on Kashmir to the Security Council.[21] I cannot say now what this report will contain, but it is possible that Dr. Graham might suggest a continuation of his efforts to find a solution. So far as we are concerned, we cannot object to any such proposal. Thus far we have discussed with Dr. Graham only one subject, that is, the reduction of armed forces in Kashmir. We have agreed to a large-scale reduction, provided, of course, all Pakistan armies and auxiliaries are withdrawn from Kashmir state territory. We have given a minimum number of forces which we think have to be kept by us in Kashmir for reasons of security. This number is about 1/5th of the number of forces at the time of the ceasefire in January 1949. We cannot go below this figure. There is, therefore, not much room for argument on this matter. If any fresh approach is made by Dr. Graham, we are always prepared to consider it, keeping in view our basic commitments in Kashmir.

15. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the Prime Minister of Kashmir, recently made a speech in some part of Jammu province,[22] which has attracted a good deal of attention and

21. In his report to the Security Council on 22 April 1952, Graham stated that of the twelve proposals relating to demilitarization made to India and Pakistan on 7 September 1951, eight had been accepted. He wished to continue his efforts for an agreement on the remaining four points and requested extension of his term.

22. Speaking at Ranbirsinghpura on 10 April 1952, Sheikh Abdullah said that the Kashmiris were prepared to "join India without any kind of mental reservations," and "welcome the application of India's Constitution to Kashmir in its entirety," once they were convinced that communalism had been completely eliminated from the country. Kashmir's accession to India was restricted to defence, foreign affairs, and communications, and in all other matters Kashmir must enjoy internal autonomy.

criticism.[23] I confess that I was not happy about this speech. What I did not like about it was more the manner of approach than the actual statements made. We have to remember, however, that a local speech made to a particular audience, should not be taken out of its context. Sheikh Sahib was dealing with a particular reactionary and communal manifestation in Jammu, and he spoke in relation to that. Unfortunately, this context is not kept in view by most of the readers of the speech. The constitutional position in regard to Kashmir is quite clear. Kashmir has acceded to India in regard to three basic subjects: defence, foreign affairs and communications. That holds. For the rest, it is open to Kashmir to accede to some other subjects or not. That is, subject to these major Central responsibilities in regard to the three subjects mentioned above, Kashmir is autonomous. Apart from this, we have made it perfectly clear, that it is for the people of Kashmir to decide about their future.

16. The accession of Kashmir to India on those three subjects involves many other matters, such as some kind of financial integration, etc. These will naturally have to be considered by the Central Government and the State Government.

17. The State of Madras, and more especially the Rayalaseema area of it, is suffering from famine conditions. The nature of this famine is very different from that of Bihar last year. We have plenty of food in the country and we have sent enough of it to Madras. The real difficulty is lack of water and lack of purchasing power. It must be remembered that there has been a successive failure of rains in those areas for five

23. On 11 April, Pakistan's Minister for Kashmir Affairs welcomed Sheikh Abdullah's statement as the "first public expression of Kashmiri Muslims' apprehensions concerning their future." Commenting on Abdullah's statement, S.P. Mookerjee said on 12 September, that "this is a strange and sinister statement calculated to strengthen the hands of Pakistan." The statement was also criticized by the Jammu and Kashmir Parishad. On 13 April, Tara Singh said that "as long as Sheikh Abdullah was head of Jammu and Kashmir, it would neither accede to India nor Pakistan but join Russia..."

years. I am told that there has been no record of any such continued failure before, and Madras has been peculiarly unfortunate. We are doing our utmost to meet this situation, both by starting public works and by throwing our Army there to help in the transport of water and for other purposes. The Prime Minister's Relief Fund is affording such help as it can. This Fund has proved its utility in the past few years. I hope that contributions to it will continue from all parts of India and even abroad because of the large demands made upon it.

18. Recently I visited [24] the Bhakra-Nangal project in the Punjab and Chandigarh, where the new capital of the Punjab is growing up. This visit impressed me greatly. The engineering feats at Bhakra-Nangal are remarkable. The whole of the Punjab and parts of Rajputana and some other places are looking forward to the life-giving water that will come from the Sutlej river through the new canals that are being dug. Also, hydro-electric power will be produced and industries will grow.

19. Chandigarh promises to be a model and attractive city, combining the best features of the East and the West. A very eminent French architect, Monsieur Le Corbusier,[25] is in charge from the architectural point of view.

20. Wherever I go now, I am interested in the housing problem. I feel more and more not only the urgency of this but that we have perhaps not thought of it on the right line. We considered it always in terms of brick and mortar, cement and solid buildings which are costly. Because of the large finances involved, we cannot undertake it on any big scale. A different approach might well reduce the cost greatly, give more far-reaching results, and perhaps produce houses which are more suited to our climate and customs. We begin by thinking of

24. On 3 April 1952.

25. Charles Edouard Jeanneret (1887-1965). French (Swiss-born) architect, painter, and writer; a pioneer in creating modern functional architecture.

pucca houses. I think we should think more of sanitation, water supply and lighting, and only then of habitation. That habitation might well be a shed or a thatched hut, which would depend on the climate and rainfall of the area. It would also, perhaps, be better to have industrial housing away from the heart of the city where land is very expensive. It would be easier to provide transport and there will be more space available on the outskirts of the city. Light and air are more important than a brick house. Nothing could be worse than the slums that have grown up in some of our cities, including Delhi, even though those slums consist of solid buildings. Our P.W.D. rules and regulations and methods of approach to these matters have to be revised.

21. When I was in Calcutta recently for a meeting of the All India Congress Committee,[26] the question of detenus was brought up before me.[27] Fortunately, I had our Home Minister, Dr. Katju, with me then, and we discussed this matter with Dr. B.C. Roy, the Chief Minister of West Bengal. We were clearly of opinion that the time had come for all the cases of detenus to be reviewed and revised with a view, as far as possible, to release them. I hope that your Government will follow this policy.

22. Yesterday I took part in the inauguration of the three new Railway systems, the Northern, the North-Eastern and the Eastern. That was a historic moment in the life of our Railways. I remember the terrible state of our Railways five or six years ago. The war had affected them badly and they were almost in a broken-down condition. Then came partition and an upsetting of everything. This was followed by the enormous migrations. The transport of food became a major problem. In

26. Nehru was in Calcutta from 21 to 25 March and the A.I.C.C. meeting was held on 22 and 23 March 1952.

27. A deputation of the All Parties Political Prisoners' Release Committee led by Meghnad Saha met Nehru on 23 March 1952. The deputation included members of the Socialist Party, Forward Bloc, Revolutionary Socialist Party and other left-wing groups.

spite of all this, the Indian Railways have not only survived and done fine work, but have increased in efficiency. I think that we have legitimate reason to be proud of this great State enterprise in which all of us are sharers.

23. Unfortunately, there has been some controversy in regard to some matters affecting the new scheme of regrouping.[28] This controversy is probably largely based on sentiment. One can understand that sentiment and yet the question has to be considered objectively and from the point of view of administrative efficiency and the good of the travelling public as a whole. One or two matters have been left over for decisions later, but the major decisions in regard to this new scheme of reorganization have been given effect to.[29]

24. As I have told you, an Indian cultural mission, headed by Vijayalakshmi Pandit, will be going to China soon. We attach importance to this mission. It has to be remembered that history and geography have brought India and China near to each other. However much we may agree or differ with each other in regard to our policies, the relationship of India and China is of paramount importance to both our countries and the world. Looked at in long perspective it becomes even more important.

28. The Government announced on 15 March 1952 the formation of the three remaining zones under the Railway Regrouping Plan, viz., the Northern Railway, the North-Eastern Railway and the Eastern Railway with their headquarters at Delhi, Gorakhpur and Calcutta respectively. The East Indian Railway Employees' Union demanded that the old E.I.R. should be kept intact; the revised scheme should keep the Allahabad Division of the E.I.R. in the Northern Zone and Gorakhpur should be retained as the headquarters of the North-Eastern Zone.

29. Due to agitation in Calcutta, the Ministry of Railways had announced that in regard to the Allahabad and Sealdah Divisions of the E.I.R., the Government had decided to stay their inclusion in the Northern and North-Eastern Railways respectively until after a discussion with the Chief Ministers of U.P. and West Bengal as well as the representatives of the interested groups and organizations.

25. Our future work in all the States as well as in the Centre must be largely concerned with development. The development portfolio, therefore, is of high importance in every State and the person appointed to it should be senior member of the Cabinet with drive and energy. It seems to me desirable that co-operation should be made a part of development. Our whole outlook is to develop co-operation in the State and, indeed, ultimately to have a co-operative Commonwealth. I have found that co-operation is generally considered as of minor importance and no great attention is paid to it. All kinds of rules and regulations come in the way of its development. Rules are not meant to impede but to help, and where rules come in the way they should be changed. Co-operation should be thought of very largely in terms of our rural areas and it should be something much more than the formation of credit societies. Our land problem ultimately will only be solved on the co-operative basis and we should gradually go in that direction. We have long discussed and have taken action in regard to the abolition of zamindaris, *jagirdaris* and the like. This must be put through, but this is only the first step and other steps in land reform have to follow.

26. Ministers in charge of development and co-operation should keep in close touch with the agricultural population. I think there should be active young men as Deputy Ministers also in charge of these subjects and their business should be specially to keep in touch with the people and make themselves a living link between officials on one side and villagers on the other. Some system should be devised for orders in regard to small matters to be given on the spot and not to await long secretarial procedure. The whole point of all this is to make the Government function more in a personal way, so far as the people are concerned, and to give them a sense of partnership in the work done.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
15 April, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,*

In the fortnightly letter that I am sending you today I have referred to the question of the detenus. I should like to say something more about this, because action should be taken as soon as possible.

2. When I was in Calcutta last month, I received a deputation urging upon me the release of all detenus.[1] This deputation consisted of one Communist Party member and representatives of a number of other organizations and also some fairly well-known individuals. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of feeling among normal liberal circles against indefinite detention of persons. That is a feeling which we have ourselves nurtured in the past and is understandable.

3. I pointed out to this deputation that the Detention Act had not been used merely for Communists, but also for black-marketeers, foreign spies, and, as in Saurashtra, some members of the princely and *jagirdari* order. I asked them if they would like us to release these people. They said emphatically no. Then I pointed out that their general proposition about release was not sound and that some such legislation was necessary in special cases. It may be said that the legislation had not been properly used and, if so, we could enter into each individual case.

*A special letter in addition to the Fortnightly Letters.

1. See *ante*, p 588.

4. Then I told them that so far as the Communists and the like were concerned, our policy was based on two considerations: (1) That no one should be detained for holding or expressing any opinion peacefully. It is only when violence was advocated or indulged in that we wished to take action. (2) That in the changed circumstances of today, we were of opinion that we should review the whole position with a view to releasing as large a number of detenus as possible. Indeed, we would like to release the whole lot because it was no pleasure to us to keep them detained and it was a financial burden on the State. But we had to keep in view the security of the State and, therefore, we could not give up this right. All we could say was that this right would be exercised as infrequently as possible and only in cases involving, in some way, violence.

5. The position is undoubtedly different today than it was a year or more ago. That does not mean that the Communist Party has abjured violence or its other methods of coercive action. Whatever individual Communists might say, their basic policy remains and, given the chance, will be acted upon. We have, therefore, to be wary and careful.

6. Nevertheless, it is true that, owing to recent developments, the present policy of the Communist Party in India has undergone a change for the time being at least.[2] On the whole, it might be said that there is at present no violence. There has been practically none for many months. The partial success of the Communists in the legislatures had diverted their thinking to other channels.

7. It is also true that, in fact, a very large number of Communists and others, who had been detained, have been released, and a relatively small number still remain in detention. Thus, the Communists are in a position to carry on their work, whatever that might be, without any great

2. The Communist Party of India had called off the armed struggle in Telengana and contested the general elections.

impediment. The fact that some of them are still in prison or in detention does not make any great difference to the quantum or quality of their activity. The fact that some are in detention, however, gives them a handle for continuing the agitation which affects many people who are not Communists. They gain general sympathy, and, under cover of that sympathy, they strengthen their position with the public. Hence the fact of some people being kept in detention does not come in their way at all. It rather helps them than otherwise.

8. In some places I have found that people have been detained for two or three years or even more. Broadly speaking, this does seem to me to be wrong. Probably, if they had been convicted for the kind of offence charged, their sentence might have run out. We can hardly justify this long continued detention for something that happened or was likely to happen two or three years ago. Conditions have changed. There are some kind of revising authorities, normally consisting of a high court judge. That revising authority can only consider the facts or the data placed before it at the time of the original detention. It can hardly take into consideration subsequent happenings because, in relation to that individual, nothing much could have happened since his detention. It does not help, therefore, to put these same old facts before that revising authority. If the matter has to be considered afresh, this must be done in view of the new situation that has arisen and only the Government can consider that.

9. The result of this line of thought is that it is no longer desirable or advantageous from any point of view to keep persons in detention, except in very special and obvious cases. Generally speaking, this continuation of detention serves the very cause for which the persons detained stand for. The risk involved in releasing them is less than the other risks involved in keeping them. Therefore, it is desirable to take early steps to release them.

10. Your Government has to shoulder the responsibility of law and order and therefore it is for you to consider this matter

thoroughly. We do not wish to force your hands in any way. But it is our considered opinion that the time has come to review this whole matter most liberally. If we do so now, it would be easier for us to take any action later, if that becomes necessary. If, on the other hand, we continue the present detentions, then we have to face a continuous agitation and outcry and public opinion grows against us. I have no doubt that in the State Assemblies, as well as in the Central Parliament, these questions will be brought up repeatedly and instead of submitting to pressure then, it is better for us to take action previously.

11. There is also the question of banning the Communist Party. Our courts have already declared against this. It is desirable, therefore, to remove these bans before we are compelled to do so by some decision of the local high court.

12. I would like your immediate attention to these matters. As I have said above, the responsibility being yours, you must exercise your own discretion. I have indicated our general approach to these problems. Indeed, I have made this general approach public in the statement I made before the All India Congress Committee in Calcutta.[5]

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

5. Outlining Government's policy on the question of detenus at the A.I.C.C. session on 23 March 1952, Nehru said that "it is our policy that none should be detained for any expression of opinion whatsoever, provided it had nothing to do with violence or instigation to violence. But where violence came into the picture directly or indirectly, the Government would step in."

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New Delhi
4 May, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

This letter of mine is going to be the last before other changes take place in Delhi. During the next fortnight the newly elected President will be installed,[1] the old Government will resign[2] and a new Government will be formed.[3] The new Parliament will meet[4] and a new phase in India's history will begin. In the States also new Governments have either been formed or will be formed in the course of the next few days.

2. All these changes are not merely mechanical. They have significance and a deeper meaning and they put greater responsibilities on all of us who are in charge as Ministers either at the Centre or in the States. It is a vast responsibility for all of us and I am continually thinking of how we can make ourselves capable of discharging it. Governments have to face fairly strong opposition in the Legislatures. That is not an unwelcome development in our political life. What works in my mind is not the opposition but the faith of the people who have sent us here and charged us with this great and responsible work. How can we fulfil that charge and be true to the faith that has been reposed in us?

3. We must, of course, function with integrity and efficiency, thinking always of the masses of our people. There is always the danger of our falling back into the dead routine of office and

1. Rajendra Prasad was declared elected on 6 May 1952. He was sworn in on 13 May 1952.
2. Resigned on 13 May 1952.
3. On 13 May 1952.
4. On 13 May 1952.

functioning, at best as competent civil servants. A competent civil servant is very useful and indeed essential in the working of any Government. But he is apt to function rather mechanically, however competently, and to proceed along old grooves of thought and activity. Something more is needed for those who have to lay down policies and to deal with the fortunes of this mighty country and her hundreds of millions of people. We have to be cautious certainly, but we have to be adventurous also all the time and exhibit qualities of leadership. To be just correct and static in a changing and dynamic world is to be left behind in spite of all correctness. To ignore correctness and rush headlong without adequate thought and preparation is folly. We have to steer a middle course, but that course must be vital and infused with that invisible and unsubstantial spirit which gives life to a great movement. We are not, I hope, just politicians, playing a game of political chess. There have been some instances of this latter in recent weeks and they have not advanced our public morals or the tone of our political life. I have noticed them with deep regret.

4. Those of us, who were fortunate enough to take an active part in the struggle for India's freedom, had this spirit within us and so, in spite of difficulty and occasional misfortune, we marched ahead with light foot and raised head. Our great leader, Gandhiji, with the magic that was in him, filled the whole country with something of his own spirit. Our movement developed an ethos in which all of us shared to some degree. We did not scramble for office or profit or think of our bank accounts; we thought of other things and as we think, so ultimately we act.

5. These thoughts come to me at this changing stage of India's story and I wonder if we can develop some measure of that ethos again. If we can do so, then all is well with us and with our people. If not, then we are mere pedestrians labouring along slowly, when others, more swift of foot, pass us by. It is not much good our criticizing others even though those others

may pursue wrong paths. Their wrongness does not hurt us much if we function rightly. But if we fail to do so, then we have ceased to function and deserve the fate of those whom the world ignores and passes by. You will forgive me for these musings but I want to share my thoughts with you and at this moment it is right that we think a little quietly not only of the present but of the past and more so of the future.

6. A few days ago a man passed away who was remarkable for his uprightness and his integrity of purpose. Sir Stafford Cripps[5] was not only a friend of India but a friend of humanity and throughout his varied career he was a symbol of those rare who work with singleness of purpose for great causes. It is a misfortune to us as to others that he is dead.

7. I have recently paid a brief visit to Darjeeling,[6] Sikkim[7] and Kalimpong.[8] As I stood on these north-eastern mountains of ours, with a background of snowy peaks and with the whole land of India stretched out before me, I felt strangely moved. I was on the very edge of India and nearby were other great countries who were playing an important part in present-day events. Some people are worried about dangers to us from across our various frontiers. We have to take precautions of course, but the possibility of this danger does not trouble me. If we have strength, strength of spirit and unity of effort, then all dangers fade away. I saw in those mountain regions many kinds and types of people, speaking different languages, each with its own distinctive type of face and figure. Yet all of them were citizens of India and I wondered afresh at the great variety of our country as well as of the unity that holds it together. I wish that many of my countrymen could travel to the far-ends of India in all directions and thus gain some realization of this richness and variety. Many of us, I fear, think narrowly of their own little corner and their own ways and customs and imagine

5. He died at Zurich on 21 April 1952. For b. fn. see Vol.1, p.455.
6. Nehru visited Darjeeling on 26 April 1952.
7. Nehru was in Gangtok from 27 to 29 April 1952.
8. On 29 April 1952.

that that alone is India. But India is far greater, far richer and more varied than any part of it. We have to develop an outlook which embraces all this variety and considers it our very own. None of us is an alien in any part of India, and yet some of us speak and think in a manner which considers others who are not exactly like us as something almost like aliens. A great country and narrowness of mind and outlook go ill together.

8. I am glad that Dr. Radhakrishnan has been elected unopposed as our Vice-President.[9] He will be, I am sure, a tower of strength to us in Delhi in these difficult days to come. With his deep knowledge of India's culture and his wide experience of the West and of modern trends in international affairs, he is peculiarly fitted to advise us. The President's election has, I regret, been contested[10] though result of it is certain.

9. Our Army has joined in the relief work in Rayalaseema in Madras.[11] I am always happy to see our Army functioning in a civil capacity. It is not meant for warfare only but should always be ready to help our people whenever necessary.

10. In regard to food, there is at present no lack of it in the country and we have an adequate quantity in reserve. Indeed our calculations have been somewhat upset. At the beginning of this year, the demands from various States amounted to about 7 million tons. It was physically impossible for us to import this quantity and financially it would have been too heavy a burden for us to carry. After some debate and argument this figure was reduced to about 4 1/2 millions. Now we find that even that is probably in excess of our

9. Elected on 25 April 1952; sworn in on 13 May 1952.

10. Five candidates contested the Presidentship. Besides Rajendra Prasad, the others were K.T. Shah, Hari Ram, Krishna Kumar Chatterjee, and L.G. Thatte.

11. Operations for famine relief in Rayalaseema acquired a "war tempo" when army units went into action on 21 April 1952 to improve the water resources of the region.

requirements. Why is this so? It would appear that there was little reality in the demands made by many of the States on the Centre. Feeling that the Centre will subsidize these foodgrains, the States pitched their demands at the highest. It became quite impossible for the Centre to subsidize all this and thereupon it was announced that the subsidy would be withdrawn, except in special cases. As a result, suddenly the demands from States were considerably reduced. This itself showed how far from reality their previous demands were. The stoppage of the subsidy suddenly brought reality into the picture.

11. It is true that the rise in food prices, though balanced in some ways by a fall in prices of other commodities, must necessarily cause not only inconvenience but hardship. Protest meetings have been held[12] and this has become a weapon in the hands of the critics of Government. It is manifest that a widespread subsidy, as of old, would have very serious consequences and we cannot revert to it. But Governments must examine where there is real hardship and try to remove it to the best of their ability. We intend to do so.

12. As I have said above, the stoppage of the subsidy brought reality into the picture and we know now much better than we did before what our exact food position is. Our large imports of foodgrains this year, which have already been contracted for, will not all be consumed this year. A considerable quantity will be carried over to the next year. Thus we will at last succeed in creating a large reserve for India, an objective we have been aiming at ever since the war years. This will prevent in future speculation in food and the danger of a short supply will be over.

12. On 13 April 1952, a protest meeting was held under the joint auspices of left-wing organizations to demand the immediate restoration of food prices to the "pre-rise level". A protest week beginning from 13 April was also organized. On 27 April 1952, the United People's Food Committee held a mass rally in New Delhi to protest against an increase in the prices of rationed cereals.

13. Some two weeks ago Pakistan informed us[13] that they proposed to introduce a passport system between India and Pakistan. So far as Western Pakistan and India were concerned, this made no great difference as there is already a permit system. But this would make a considerable difference to the traffic between East Bengal and West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, where there has been no permit system and traffic has been free. Indeed this free traffic was assured and encouraged by the Indo-Pakistan Agreement of the 8th April, 1950. It seems to us unfair for that Agreement to be by-passed unilaterally and we pointed this out to the Pakistan Government.[14] But they have been insistent and if they have decided to introduce this system of passports we cannot prevent them from doing so. We shall have to take necessary measures on our side. We hope that the measures taken in East and West Bengal will still enable a certain freedom of movement.

14. Dr. Graham's Third Report on Kashmir has recently been issued.[15] This does not carry things very far and we are more or less where we were. We are agreeable, now as previously, to every attempt being made to find a way out and reach a peaceful solution. Therefore, we are agreeable to Dr. Graham continuing his efforts. But we have already made our position perfectly clear in regard to the minimum number of forces that

13. On 9 April 1952.

14. The Pakistan Government were told on 10 April 1952 that the existence and implementation of this provision for freedom of movement in the Prime Ministers' Agreement had helped to restore a sense of confidence and security among the minorities in both parts of Bengal.

15. Graham's report submitted on 22 April 1952 said that the encouraging developments were: India and Pakistan had partially withdrawn forces concentrated on the frontiers to their normal peace-time stations; some degree of demilitarization had been secured in Kashmir with the withdrawal of the bulk of Indian troops and in regard to the plebiscite administration; and India had expressed her hope that it was not difficult to agree on the date for its implementation. But the fundamental issues remained unsettled—the status of India and Pakistan in Kashmir, the validity of accession, and the right and obligations of India in regard to the security of the state.

we think must remain in Kashmir so long as there is any danger of aggression. That number cannot be reduced.

15. Recently Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan underwent a serious operation in Lahore.[16] The news of this was received with great anxiety all over India and there was spontaneous evidence in many places of this anxiety and of the affection that the people of India have for Badshah Khan. For over four years, this great patriot and soldier of freedom has lain in Pakistan prisons. Perhaps there is no greater individual or national tragedy than this continuation in prison of a person beloved by millions, who did so much to bring about that freedom which he himself has been unable to share.

16. In Ceylon, a very large number of persons of Indian origin have been disfranchized[17] and are unable to vote in the general elections that are going to take place soon.[18] There has been a great deal of feeling in India at this manifest unfairness and in Ceylon itself, the Indians have organized peaceful satyagraha.[19] There can be no doubt that the sympathy of India is with these people whose claim is considered just.

16. On 13 April 1952.

17. In 1949 Sri Lanka had removed the names of voters of Indian origin from the electoral registers, but laid down that Indians who applied for citizenship before 6 August 1951 would be eligible to vote. About 237,000 applications, covering nearly 659,000 persons of Indian origin were handed in but only about 9,000 of these were dealt with before the elections. The electoral registers for 1950 showed the names of 8,500 Indians only, though the register for the previous years had shown the names of 165,000.

18. General elections, the first since Sri Lanka attained Dominion Status, were held between 24-30 May 1952 and resulted in the victory for the coalition headed by the United National Party.

19. Following a resolution adopted by the annual session of the Ceylon Indian Congress on 19 April 1952, a campaign of civil disobedience was launched on 28 April by undertaking fasts outside the House of Representatives and the offices of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Justice, Home Affairs and Food.

17. A few days ago, the state of war with Japan ended and Japan again became an independent country.[20] It is true that this independence is somewhat hedged in by certain commitments.[21] Nevertheless, the re-emergence of Japan is of great significance and it will, no doubt, play an ever-increasing role in the Far East. What that role will ultimately be cannot be predicted at present. There are many complicating factors. Normally, it would appear inevitable that Japan and the Chinese mainland have close trade and other relations, supplying each other's wants. But Japan has no relations with the People's Government in China and has, in fact, come to some understanding with the Formosa regime.[22] How far this policy is popular in Japan, it is difficult to say. It is quite possible that on this issue, as well as some connected issues, there might be a deep cleavage in Japan.[23] The large-scale May Day riots in Japan[24] were evidence of strong under-currents opposed to the present policy of the Japanese Government.

18. The Tunisian affair, important as it is from the point of view of freedom from colonial domination, has assumed a larger significance, chiefly at our instance. It seemed to us very extraordinary that the request made by a very large number of

20. On 28 April 1952, Dean Acheson, the Secretary of State, deposited the United States ratification of the Japanese peace treaty signalling the resumption of Japan's status as an independent and sovereign nation.

21. See *ante*, pp 483-484.

22. By a peace treaty signed on 28 April 1952 at Taipeh between Japan and Nationalist China, Japan had renounced all special interests and rights in "China".

23. There was widespread criticism in Japan over the retention of American troops in the main islands with extra-territorial rights; Japan's dependence on the U.S. for raw materials and markets; the restriction imposed on Japan's trade with China; and the semi-independent status accorded to Japan by the San Francisco settlement. When the peace treaty and the security pact came before the Diet on 17 and 18 October 1951 for ratification, the Liberal Democratic Front and the Socialist members expressed great dissatisfaction and described them as "one-sided, unequal and slavish."

24. The demonstrations were marked by serious rioting and violent anti-American demonstrations.

Asian and African countries, supported by some Latin American countries, for a discussion of the issue in the Security Council, was turned down by that Council.[25] Quite apart from the merits of the case, this is a serious matter because it affects the whole future of the United Nations. This question shows, more than ever, that the United Nations Organization is gradually undergoing a vital change from what it used to be. It was started as an organization in which all the nations of the world would have some measure of free play. It was to be a universal forum. It was true that existing facts were recognized by laying down that Great Powers would have a veto in certain matters. This might appear illogical, but it was a recognition of the factual situation, as it was not possible to have sanctions against a Great Power without provoking world war. The United Nations, as an organ of peace, avoided this danger by the provision of the veto and in the hope that discussions round the Council table would themselves be a powerful factor in preventing war.

19. The attempt, successful thus far, to keep the new China out of the United Nations was the first major step in lessening the universality of the United Nations. In doing so facts were also ignored, because essentially the new China was not only a stable and well-established fact, but was also rapidly becoming a great power. Because of this the U.N. became something less than it was, and this great organization, meant for peace, was itself dragged into war. It is true that aggression had to be resisted. But the drift continued and the division of the world into power blocs, one of which was connected with the United Nations, developed. The Atlantic Pact was meant for the defence of the Atlantic community. This now includes countries like Turkey and Greece which are very far from the Atlantic. Also the Atlantic Pact gradually becomes not only one

25. The request was rejected on 14 April 1952. While Brazil, Chile, Republic of China, Soviet Union and Pakistan voted in favour, Britain and France opposed it and U.S.A., the Netherlands, Greece and Turkey abstained from voting.

to ensure the defence of certain countries bordering on the Atlantic, but also appears to become a guarantor of their colonial possessions. Thus, the United Nations becomes indirectly a protector of existing forms of colonialism. In theory, this may not be so, and indeed the Charter lays down completely different principles, but, in practice, there is this gradual change and reorientation.

20. The Tunisian issue illustrates, rather vividly, this latest development. There can be no doubt that Tunisia is a clear example of a national movement opposed to a colonial power. But this simple issue becomes entangled with the rivalries of great nations and, as a consequence, some of these great nations line up with the colonial power against the national movement. But quite apart from the merits of this question, it does appear extraordinary that even a discussion in the Security Council should be prevented. Thus, the desires of practically every country in Asia and Africa and some in South America are ignored and bypassed. The position of these countries, representing more than half the population of the world, becomes embarrassing in the United Nations, and the United Nations appears to become more and more a vehicle for the decisions of one or two or three Great Powers. Whatever reasons of expediency might be advanced to justify this development, it cannot possibly be good in the long run. The best of reasons do not justify a wrong course. The future of the United Nations is affected by this.

21. Our draft Five Year Plan is now being revised and it is hoped that this revision might be completed by the end of June. Ever since its first publication,[26] it has attracted a great deal of attention and much criticism, friendly as well as unfriendly, has been advanced. The Planning Commission have given every consideration to this criticism and have also conferred with many representative people again. As soon as this plan is finalized, it will be considered by Government and Parliament.

26. 9 July 1951.

There can, of course, be no finality in any plan and it has to be adapted to varying circumstances from time to time. But some definite objectives have to be laid down, some present finality reached about our targets and how we are to attain them. This Plan is very much a joint effort not only of various governments in India but of numerous organizations and people. I earnestly trust that the implementation of the Plan will also be a joint effort.

22. The community centre scheme,[27] which has been drawn up with the assistance of U.S. Technical Aid, is both a part of this Plan and some addition to it as it was originally conceived. It is thus now an integral part of the Plan but it will function, to some extent, as a separate whole. Much is expected of it in food production and even more so in building up of the community and co-operative spirit. In particular, it should attract many of our bright young men and women who have something of the crusading spirit in them. For the moment we are having about 55 centres all over India, but the Plan envisages the growth of these centres every year till we have more than 500 of them. If we can do this, as we have every intention of doing, this will undoubtedly change the face of India, more especially of rural India, which requires more help from us than urban centres. It is important in this community centre programme, as well as in the rest of our Plan, that definite targets with definite dates should be aimed at. We must fix these dates for completing some task or other. This will enable us to judge of the progress made in each centre and will bring in a much-required element of speed in our work.

23. When our original Plan was drawn up, there was a gap between our estimated resources and the financial requirements of the Plan. This gap might have been filled partly by special efforts to raise our internal resources and by external help. External help, of course, would be welcome as

27. This programme was inaugurated on 2 October 1952 in 55 centres in various parts of the country.

we have welcomed the help that has come or may come in the future, from the United States. All this help goes towards the fulfilment of the Plan in some of its aspects. But we have always to remember that no plan can be or should be entirely dependent upon external help. If, by some mischance that external help is lacking, then the Plan should not suffer irretrievably. Naturally, in such a case, the progress of some parts of our Plan might be slowed down and we might have to tighten our belts still further. But we shall go on nevertheless to the best of our ability.

24. In estimating our national resources, we have naturally to think largely in terms of things that we can weigh and measure and calculate. But a nation's resources consist of many other things, which are highly important, but which cannot be considered in the form of statistics. There is the energy of the nation, the spirit of the people and the crusading ardour which might be put into any task. If these are present then resources grow tremendously. Even in regard to money, there is a great deal in the country which is not easily accessible to Government but which might be made available, given the right appeal. I think that there is plenty of available money in the country. An appeal for a Government loan or the like usually reaches a fairly limited number of people. The object aimed at is vague and distant and does not strike the imagination. If, however, the objective was connected with local needs and conditions, which could be easily understood by the people concerned, then the appeal would immediately have a good response. We have planned from the top, though we have taken counsel from all kinds of people. That was inevitable. But this procedure leaves out to a large extent the innumerable petty needs of the people which count for so much in their lives and in their activities. In each district people need roads, wells, tanks, small bridges, schools, dispensaries and the like. Any improvement in this direction is immediately seen and felt and appreciated. Each single item does not cost much but in the aggregate, taking the whole of India, it costs a great deal. State Governments have no doubt considered these matters and included them in their

plans. Nevertheless, even so the planning has been from the top and the people have not been directly connected with it.

25. It is for us to consider how we can bring in this direct and intimate connection of the people not only with the execution of the Plan but also in the earlier stages, in so far as their immediate needs are concerned. This might be done in a district with the help of village panchayats and the like. They would probably put up schemes for roads, wells, etc. We might tell them that we would gladly help if they helped themselves both financially and by voluntary labour. This appeal for their help would then be directly connected with something that they wanted and valued, something they understood, something therefore that would rouse their enthusiasm. I have no doubt that this would bring out many otherwise untapped resources. Government could help in many ways including by undertaking, let us say, 50 per cent of the cost. If this was done all over the country, in each district, we would add to our financial resources as well as bring in something of great value, i.e., the intimate association of the people with the planning as well as the implementation. Some such scheme could be added on to our general Plan without any very great burden upon it. I should like you to consider this idea and to develop it.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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New Delhi
18 May, 1952

My dear Chief Minister,

Since I wrote to you last, the new Government has come into existence [1] and new appointments of a number of Governors have been made.[2] The newly elected Parliament has also begun its sessions.[3] The President, newly elected, has taken his oath of office and has delivered his Address to Parliament.[4]

2. Thus we begin a new chapter in our history and face anew great responsibilities. The governance of any country in the world today is no easy matter; the governance of a great and varied country like India is perhaps as hard a task as any in the world today. Any person who is associated with this governance must approach this great task with humility as well as with a measure of faith. Whether we are small men or big, we are engaged in great undertakings affecting the life and future of vast numbers of human beings. No man can say with certainty that success will come to him, but every man can determine to do his utmost to achieve success. We can measure success or failure by certain physical standards and statistical methods.

1. The President, the Vice-President and the new Government were sworn in on 13 May 1952.

2. K.M. Munshi, G.S. Bajpai, R.R. Diwakar and Fazl Ali were on 14 May 1952 appointed as Governors of Uttar Pradesh, Bombay, Bihar and Orissa respectively.

3. On 16 May 1952.

4. The President's Address expressed concern over the inflationary trends, the growing unemployment and the rise of the spirit of sectarianism and communalism in the country. He also reiterated India's policy of friendship towards all countries and support to the nationalist movements in Asia and Africa.

But those standards and methods ignore certain immaterial and immeasurable things, which ultimately count far more than anything else. Success means raising the material, the cultural, the moral and the spiritual level of the people. A feeling of success ultimately is itself a test of achievement. The governance of a country does not merely consist in issuing orders from some high office, but rather in reaching the minds and hearts of masses of people, of bringing about satisfactory human relations. Ultimately almost every problem can be resolved into one of human relations—the relationship of one individual with another, of an individual with a group and of one group with another group. The group may become a national group and then we have international relations. We have to deal with human beings and humanity and we can only deal with them if we always keep in view the human aspect of every problem. We are apt to forget this, living in our ivory tower of government offices and dealing impersonally with files and papers, but behind those files and papers and the problems discussed in them, lie human beings.

3. With all the manifest disadvantages of personal and autocratic rule, there was some advantage in it as there was a certain human touch about it, at any rate when it was on a small scale. The growth of modern governments and the intricacies of modern societies put an end to this personal touch and with it often goes the human approach. I have noticed this change even in our small Indian states which were governed, and usually very badly governed, by local rulers and which have now become merged into the larger scheme of things. I have no doubt that the changes that have been brought about are good and lay the foundation of future progress. Nevertheless the immediate result has not been so good, in so far as the individual there is concerned. He has lost the personal touch and now has to contend against an invisible and unapproachable system of government, and his plaintive cry seldom reaches it. In terms of human happiness, it is a little doubtful if he has gained in the present or not, however much his future might be bettered. We have received some money

which was taken by the previous ruler for personal use. We have, however, put up a more expensive set of officers who function much more efficiently than those whom they have succeeded but function also more distantly from the people. Efficiency is good but it may also be hard if it is without that human touch

4. The new Government has been formed and there is now the normal complement of Ministers in charge of portfolios.[5] Thus far I have not added to the Ministers of State or Deputy Ministers. But it is my intention to do so because I think the enormous quantity of work requires it, and also because I think it is an essential part of the democratic system of government to have these stages of training in the practice of government. A Republic, or any democratic government, does not depend upon an individual or a few individuals. If it is to succeed it must have a large number of trained people, so that if any go out or fade away, as they must from time to time, others can take their place with credit.

5. This applies to State Governments as much as to the Centre. I have noticed however with regret that appointments of Deputy Ministers and the like are often governed by extraneous factors, of satisfying this group or that individual, and not on merit. Such factors have to be taken into consideration and cannot be ignored in democracy but they should only be secondary considerations. If merit suffers and the people having that merit are not given the opportunity to utilize it, then standards go down and the country goes down with them.

6. Another rather odd point of view has been brought before me repeatedly during these last few months. If a person is not chosen as a candidate for election he feels that it is something to

5. The new team of Ministers headed by Jawaharlal Nehru consisted of fifteen Cabinet Ministers.

his discredit, almost, as it were, as if it was an insult to him. If a person is not chosen as a Minister or, even more so, if a person who has been a Minister is not reappointed as such, it is interpreted as in some way a condemnation of that person. That is a very wrong approach. Selections and appointments are made on a balance of many considerations and one good man may be selected and another good man might not be. There is no discredit involved, no condemnation. An important fact to be borne in mind is the necessity of fresh blood, new faces, new outlooks. It is a bad thing for the same persons, however good, to perpetuate themselves in office. This is bad for them and bad for the public. Inevitably there is staleness and we function in set grooves of thought. Also opportunity is denied to newcomers who may be good, and no provision is made for a proper succession.

7. In our army, and in most other senior appointments, the rule appears to be that a person should be appointed if he is senior and fit. Fitness is a somewhat negative quality, that is, it means that there is nothing to show unfitness. It may be that some one slightly junior is far better on the ground of merit. But seniority prevails as a rule. I have pointed out repeatedly to our army people and to others that while we should honour seniority, merit must be the most important criterion in every high appointment. It is a curious fact that in recent major wars nearly all the senior Generals had to be discarded and new and much younger ones took their place in the early stage of the war. Peace-time promotions did not justify themselves in the crisis of war.

8. In the appointment of Governors, there are two general rules which we have observed, apart from merit, of course. One is that the appointment of a person from the same province should be avoided, the other is that a Governor should not have more than one full term of office as such. I think both these rules as salutary and should be made into firm conventions. There might be rare exceptions for a whole. Indeed, even in the

present case, some exceptions have been made but these are for a limited period.[6]

9. We have now had experience of our Governors functioning for a number of years. Some people think that a Governor is just a formal and rather decorative Head of the State without any important functions, except perhaps social ones. This is not correct either from the constitutional or other points of view. The Governor is, of course, the constitutional head and he should not and cannot override or interfere with the decisions of his Cabinet who are responsible to the State Legislature. But even without interference, he has a good many functions to perform. He should be kept in full touch with the administration and should see all the important papers which ministers consider. He should give his advice in regard to any matter whenever he considers this necessary. It is open to his ministers to accept or not to accept that advice. But it is his bounden duty to give advice, formally or informally, and for his ministers to consider it. A Governor also must keep in touch with the people. He should be not only a social head of the State but also a person who comes into intimate touch with all classes. He should tour about, more specially in the rural areas and in places which are likely to be neglected. He should exercise his influence in removing friction between groups or individuals in Government or Assembly. He should in particular pay attention to the backward classes, tribal people, etc. Any governmental action in regard to these people must necessarily be taken by the Government, but a Governor can bring a personal and human touch into this business and thus make these unfortunate and somewhat disinherited people feel that they also have an honoured place in our India of today. I have appreciated greatly the tours of some of our Governors

6. On 14 May 1952, Jairamdas Doulatram, C.M. Trivedi and H.C. Mookerjee were reappointed as Governors of Assam, the Punjab and West Bengal respectively. They had earlier resigned on 8 February 1952 as required by the Constitution. Sri Prakasa was to continue as Governor of Madras.

among the tribal people, who normally live an isolated and neglected life, and who deserve so much help and sympathy from us.

10. I have noticed with some distress the recent procedure adopted by some members of Assemblies in walking out when the Governor or the Rajpramukh came to deliver his address to the Assembly.[7] The worst instance of this kind occurred in Madras where a leading member of the Opposition actually interrupted the Governor, stood up and made a statement and then walked out with his colleagues.[8] This was not merely a personal affront to the Governor as an individual but I think that it was an affront to our Constitution. The Governor goes to the Assembly and functions otherwise as Head of the State. He is a symbol of the State and it is not a question of a person liking him or disliking him. To honour him is to honour the State, to dishonour him is to dishonour oneself as part of the State. We have to rise above personal considerations in such matters. There are certain symbols and emblems of the State or country which have to be honoured unless we are untrue to our country. There is the national flag, the national anthem, the President and the Governor. We have to learn some discipline in our national life and not bring in our personal prejudices and animosities in the consideration of matters which are above individual or party conflict. Let us have as much argument and even political conflict as we like, provided of course that it is carried on with decency. But to challenge the basis of the State and the Constitution is another matter. In this connection, I should like to say also that it is a matter of regret that some Indians go to foreign countries and decry their own country or

7. For example, on 17 April 1952, 32 opposition members in the Pepsu Legislative Assembly walked out when the Rajpramukh, the Maharaja of Patiala, began his address.

8. As Sri Prakasa, the Governor, rose to address the joint session of the State Legislature on 6 May 1952, about 100 members of the United Democratic Front led by T. Prakasam walked out of the Assembly to protest against C. Rajagopalachari, a nominated member of the Upper House, being called upon by the Governor to form the Ministry.

their Government there. This is not usually done by the nationals of other countries who do not take their quarrels to foreign lands. We should learn from them.

11. You will have noticed that we have decided to give up honorific appellations like "Honourable", "His Excellency", etc. Our President, the highest in the State, had no such title or prefix attached to him and there was no particular reason why others should, except the vanity of human beings. It is a good thing therefore that we have given this up.

12. I have been meeting our new Members of Parliament. There are over 700 of them as between the two Houses. I have noticed with great regret how few women have been elected.[9] I suppose this is so in the State Assemblies and Councils also.[10] I think we are very much to be blamed. It is not a matter of showing favour to any one or even of injustice, but rather of doing something which is not conducive to the future growth of our country. I am quite sure that our real and basic growth will only come when women have a full chance to play their part in public life. Wherever they have had this chance, they have, as a whole, done well, better if I may say so, than the average man. Our laws are man made, our society dominated by man, and so most of us naturally take a very lopsided view of this matter. We cannot be objective, because we have grown up in certain grooves of thought and action. But the future of India will probably depend ultimately more upon the women than the men.

13. You will have noticed that the President, in his Address to Parliament, has mentioned the Hindu Code Bill.[11] We have

9. 66 women contested elections to Parliament and of these 19 were elected to the House of the People and 14 to the Council of States.

10. 82 out of 216 women contesting elections to State Assemblies were elected.

11. The President declared that discussion of the Hindu Code Bill would be taken up in parts by Parliament.

every intention of proceeding with this much-needed reform which concerns our womenfolk so much. But it is patent that the old method of approach, that is, proceeding with an enormous consolidated bill which was as big as a book, was not successful, however logically right it might appear to be. Any such big bill will take months to pass and any opposition to it could delay it almost indefinitely, as indeed has been the case in this particular instance. Therefore we have decided to split up this measure into some parts, each to be taken up separately. It is also, I think, necessary to revise many of the provisions of this bill and to make them simpler. It is our intention to introduce a new measure dealing with one part of the old Hindu Code Bill, in this session of Parliament. I fear however that it is not possible to deal with this or other legislative work at any length during this session, which will be occupied chiefly by budgets.

14. The President's Address to Parliament deals with our foreign policy and draws particular attention to what has happened and is happening in Korea [12] and to the way the United Nations Organization has gradually drifted away from its original purposes and methods. [13] I have written to you about this previously and I would invite your special attention to what the President has said about this. [14] It is of vital importance to world peace. There can be little doubt that if, to our infinite discredit, the truce negotiations in Korea fail and war breaks out, this will be on a bigger scale than ever before. There is no doubt that during this period of truce negotiations, armies and air forces have been built up and if unleashed, they will play

12. The President regretted that "despite assertions of goodwill for the Korean people, this ancient country has been reduced by war, hunger and pestilence to utter ruin," and hoped that peace would soon return to Korea.

13. The Special Marriage Bill, 1951 sought to remove defects noticed in the working of the Special Marriage Act of 1872 and the Hindu Marriage and Divorce Bill, 1952 aimed at laying down a uniform law relating to marriage and divorce.

14. The President regretted that the U.N. was moving away from its primary aim of the preservation of peace and "the conception of universality changes into something far narrower and the urge to peace weakens."

havoc. Perhaps there is not much left in Korea to destroy because that unhappy country is the picture of utter ruin and desolation today. But if the spark of war is lighted again, no man knows what the consequences might be. Passions and fears continue to govern the activities of great countries and logic and reason have little place. We have continued, in our own little way, to urge for peaceful solutions. Perhaps we have made a little difference, but whether that difference is enough or not, I do not know.

15. As I write this a conference is going on in Karachi [15] discussing the proposal of the Pakistan Government to introduce a passport system between India and Pakistan. As I have told you, we did not like this proposal because we thought it would interfere with the free traffic between Eastern Pakistan and West Bengal, Assam and Tripura and thus cause distress to many. As, however, Pakistan has insisted on introducing passports, we have agreed to discuss this matter with them. I cannot say now what the result of this conference will be, but it seems highly likely that some kind of a passport system will be introduced.

16. Our cultural delegation to China, headed by Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, has had a very cordial reception in Peking. The People's Government of China showed them every honour and treated them with all friendship. The delegation is now going to tour other parts of that great country.

17. There has been a good deal of agitation because of the withdrawal of food subsidies from the rationed areas.[16] As a matter of fact some subsidies are still given, more especially in regard to *milo*, so as to keep down the price of this foodgrain for the poorer people. The issue before us has been a straight one. We cannot, of course, permit real distress to continue anywhere and have to take steps to put an end to it. We have done this,

15. From 15 to 19 May 1952. The conference ended in complete failure.

16. See *ante*, p. 599.

with the help of our army, in Rayalaseema, and the army has done excellent work.[17] We are doing this in other parts of the country also. This distress in these parts of the country has very little to do with the subsidy. It is distress caused by repeated droughts, bad harvests, lack of water even to drink, and lack of purchasing power.

18. So far as the question of subsidy is concerned, we have to remember that every sum given for additional subsidy is that much less for development. We cannot have it both ways. It is a painful choice. We have considered this matter carefully and we shall continue to give the fullest thought to it, not just because there is some agitation but because we want to give as much relief as possible to those who stand in need of it.

19. The second question, i.e., the lack of purchasing power, is a deeper and more vital one. On the one hand, we demand and work for greater production. That indeed is essential if we are to progress in any direction. But greater production must necessarily mean greater consumption, or else the production stops or lessens. Thus, production has to be thought of in terms of consumption also and consumption requires the power to purchase and consume. If that purchasing power goes down, then the whole machinery of industry suffers and production also must go down. Thus we get entangled in a vicious circle. Our capacity for production is limited by our resources. To go far beyond them is to invite trouble. Those resources themselves are likely to diminish if production goes down because of lack of purchasing power.

20. It is true, as stated in the President's Address, that we have made definite progress in production. Prices have also gone down somewhat.[18] We have a large and growing stock of foodgrains. All this is to the good. But the basic question

17. See *ante*, p. 598.

18. The general index of wholesale prices came down to 367.0 in May 1952 compared to 430.0 in January 1952.

remains of increasing the purchasing power of the people so as not only to benefit them immediately but more so to break out of the vicious circle and give a push to growth and development. To this vital question we must now address ourselves.

21. It is well known and is often stated that our educational standards are going down. We produce vast numbers of graduates annually and most of them remain unemployed or badly employed. This may be due to many causes but it is undoubtedly true that educational standards have gone down. This is bad for our future. Apart from educational standards deteriorating, physical and, if I may say so, cultural and moral standards go down. We become sloppy and lack all discipline in life. This is not a matter of difference of political or other opinion. It is something more basic than that. We must deal with this and create conditions for raising our standards. One particular method, which does not directly deal with intellectual training but no doubt helps it, is some kind of physical training and manual work. I have long been convinced that our educational curriculum should lay stress on this aspect. The National Planning Committee, of which I was Chairman thirteen years ago, recommended that some kind of military training (without arms) or manual work should form part of our educational curriculum.[19] So far as I remember, they said that no person should have a degree or a diploma unless he had put in a year of such training or work. I am convinced that this should be done, though I cannot exactly say how it should be done. The training we give to our young men in the army is in many ways far superior to our normal university training although it might not produce intellectual giants. It does at least produce disciplined men who can look after themselves and who are physically and mentally fit.

19. The national planning sub-committee on education published its report on 31 January 1948.

22. I think that a year's manual work with drill should be made compulsory. At any rate, we could say that no person will be employed in government service unless he has done so. Unfortunately, our Public Service Commissions attach no value to this kind of training. Indeed, in one major State this training was organized and a fine body of men came out of it. But they were uniformly rejected by the Public Service Commission concerned, because their standards of judgment were different and did not take this into consideration.

23. Another distressing feature is the reluctance of our young medical graduates to work in rural areas or in mountain districts. They all want to go to big cities. And so, large tracts of country are neglected. An attempt was made recently to get some young men to volunteer as doctors for some of our border mountain tracts. The attempt failed as no volunteers were forthcoming. Ultimately, foreign missionaries agreed to go there. This is not very complimentary to our young men and women of the new generation. It means that they have no spirit of adventure, no grit, no capacity for hard work. If this is so, how then are we to progress? Here again I would strongly recommend that no medical graduate should be taken into government service unless he has spent a year or two in rural areas whether in the plains or the mountains.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

Glossary

Ashram	hermitage
Ayurveda	indigenous system of medicine
Bhumidan (Bhoodan)	voluntary donation of land
Diwali	festival of lights
Dussehra	festival to celebrate the triumph of good
Gur	jaggery
Hartal	strike
Holi	festival of spring
Id	Muslim festivals of sacrifice and of the breaking of the fast
Jagir	land given for services rendered
Jagirdari	the system of jagir holding
Jehad	Islamic concept of war against infidels
Ji	a suffix added to a person's name to denote respect
Jothedar	title of landlord in parts of eastern India
Khandsari	unrefined sugar
Kisan	peasant
Maund	a measure of weight around 100 *lbs.*
Milo	coarse grain
Mohalla	locality
Moharram	first month of the Muslim lunar year
Padyatra	walking tour for a special purpose
Pie	1/192 part of the rupee (no longer in use)

Ryot	cultivator
Ryotwari	peasant proprietorship
Sadhu	ascetic
Sarvodaya	movement for people's welfare
Satyagraha	literally 'truth force', Mahatma Gandhi's technique of passive resistance
Terai	sub-montane Himalayan marshes
Thana	police station
Unani	indigenous system of medicine
Vaishnavite	worshipper of Vishnu
Vanaspati	hydrogenated edible oil

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